

PFLP, DFLP announce joint leadership

DAMASCUS (R) — Two Palestinian groups have announced they were forming a joint leadership to confront what they consider to be serious threats to Palestinians posed by the Middle East peace talks. The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) headed by Nayef Hawatmeh and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) led by George Habbash announced their plan after a meeting in Damascus Monday. "The purpose of this leadership is to confront attempts aimed at eliminating the PLO and the Palestinian cause through the self-rule plan," the PFLP and DFLP are the largest guerrilla factions after the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat's Fatah group. DFLP sources said the new leadership would be responsible for directing military and political moves of the two groups especially inside the occupied territories. Details of the linking of the two groups were not disclosed. The DFLP sources said more details about the new leadership and those to be named as members would be announced within the next few days. Asked whether the announcement amounted in a full merger of the two groups, a DFLP official told Reuters this could be done at a later stage.



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Lebanese army takes over Kurdish base

HALWA, Lebanon (R) — Lebanese troops Tuesday peacefully took over the main training base in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley for Kurdish guerrillas fighting Turkey for autonomy. Seventy-five soldiers in armoured troop carriers, four jeeps and three trucks drove into the camp used by the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) in hills just west of the Syrian border. Three PKK officials, including the group's top commander in Lebanon, handed over the camp to the troops, who confiscated some military fatigues and documents but found no weapons. The PKK evacuated fighters from the base and removed weapons and ammunition in May after Syria told Ankara the group would be ejected from the Syrian-policed Bekaa Valley. The army did not enter a nearby camp used until May by Dev-Sol (Revolutionary Left), Ankara's deadliest urban guerrilla group, but security sources expected them to do so later. The PKK base was the group's sole training camp in the Bekaa. Hundreds of PKK guerrillas trained each year at Halwa before crossing into Turkey through Syria in attack Turkish targets. But Damascus agreed to crack down on the PKK this year after Ankara indicated it might bomb the bases.

Regent congratulates Saudi leader

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday sent a cable to King Fahd of Saudi Arabia congratulating him on his country's national day. Prince Hassan wished King Fahd continued good health and happiness and the Saudi people further progress and prosperity.

Six envoys present credentials

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday received the credentials of six newly appointed ambassadors to Jordan. Prince Hassan received credentials of India's Arun Kumar Bodhiraj, Jonathan Sheppard of Australia, Pierre du Moutier of Belgium, Izzuddin Al Qarqawi of Tunisia, Ibrahim Hamdi of Egypt and Andrew Robinson of Canada.

Palestinian groups call one-day strike

DAMASCUS (R) — A newly-formed alliance of Palestinian groups called Tuesday for a one-day strike to protest at a self-rule plan in the Israeli-occupied territories. "We call for a general strike in all places where Palestinians are gathered on Wednesday Sept. 23 to express our rejection of the self-rule plan and announce our commitment to our right to return to our homes," the alliance said in a statement released in Damascus. Palestinian sources said refugees at all 13 camps across Syria, home for about 500,000 Palestinians, would head the strike call.

4,450 Soviets left Israel since 1991

TEL AVIV (AP) — Two and a half per cent of recent Jewish immigrants to Israel from the former Soviet Union have left Israel not to return, the Israeli Itin news agency reported. Out of 184,787 immigrants to Israel since January 1991, about 4,450 have left and not returned, Itin said. The figures are based on applications for exit documents. Itin said that, by contrast, 3,150 former Soviet Jews who had left the country on Israeli exit documents had returned.

Iraq produces truck, gives it Kuwaiti name

NICOSIA (AP) — Iraqi engineers have manufactured the country's first truck built completely with Iraqi components and have named it after a town in Kuwait, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Tuesday. The agency said General Hussein Kamel said the five-tonne truck was built at a military industry organisation plant and named Al Jahra after the Kuwaiti town close to the Iraqi border. Gen. Kamel, the minister in charge of military industrialisation and a son-in-law of President Saddam Hussein, did not detail how Iraq managed to build the truck despite the U.N. trade embargo on the country.

Israel says 3 guerrillas killed

MARJAYOUN, Lebanon (AP) — Israeli troops ambushed a guerrilla squad in South Lebanon and killed three infiltrators in a firefight before dawn Tuesday, security sources said. The sources had no casualty report from the Israeli side. The Israeli army said one soldier was slightly hurt in the clash.

Sweden asks U.N. to help imprisoned Swedes

STOCKHOLM (R) — Sweden said Tuesday it had asked United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Ghali for help in obtaining the release of three Swedes from jail in Iraq. Foreign Minister Margaretha Af Ugglas made the request at a meeting with Dr. Ghali Monday, her ministry said. The three men were sentenced to seven years' imprisonment each by a Baghdad court on Sunday for illegally entering Iraq. Swedish authorities said Leif Westberg, Christer Stromgren and Stefan Willborg entered Iraq by mistake on Sept. 3.

Arabs, Israel try to put peace talks back on track

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAELIS AND ARABS are trying to restore Middle East peace talks to track, but the parties are still unable to bridge their differences.

Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said her team had set aside earlier demands for an Israeli pledge to negotiate on the basis of United Nations resolutions 242 and 338 and suggested discussion of issues raised by both sides earlier.

Syria, which had said last Thursday that its talks with Israel were at an impasse, described three hours of talks Monday as "a useful exchange of views."

Dr. Ashrawi said the Palestinian team took the initiative Monday, offering the Israeli side proposals to discuss issues which are of common concern to both sides. She said the ideas were taken from agenda proposals by both sides.

"We have extracted from both agendas several subjects that were issues of priority or substantive issues in order to form a common ground as an agreed-upon basis and central concern for both sides," said Dr. Ashrawi.

Chief Israeli negotiator with

the Palestinians Elyakim Rubenstein said after three hours of talks that part of the session was held informally.

Israeli spokesman Yossi Gal also proposed that Arabs and Israelis resume talks on Oct. 21 after several important Jewish holidays are over.

"At this stage it's important to keep the momentum," Mr. Gal said.

The present round of talks is scheduled to end on Thursday Sept. 24.

Syria and the Palestinians, the main parties negotiating with Israel, gave a negative assessment of the outcome of the sixth round of Middle East peace talks last week after the parties appeared unable to advance the peace talks.

Chief Syrian negotiator Mouwafak Al Alaf said Thursday, after talking out from the negotiating room, that the talks were facing problems and urged the United States to step in to break the impasse.

Asked if her team had any contacts with the Americans over the weekend, Syrian spokeswoman Bushra Kanafani said: "We had contacts with the Americans, of course."

The United States is the main sponsor of the talks but refuses to intervene in the negotiations unless invited by both sides.

U.S. Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger was to meet with Israeli and Jordanian foreign ministers in New York Tuesday.

Mr. Eagleburger planned separate afternoon meetings with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Jordanian Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber.

A wide gulf still separates the parties for more than four decades. Israel is still refusing to formally state it was willing to withdraw from the Golan Heights insisting that Damascus first declare its readiness to conclude a full peace treaty with the Jewish state.

On the Palestinian track, Israel wants Palestinians to go along with its proposals for elections for an administrative council with limited powers to run the affairs of the nearly two million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Under terms brokered by former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, Palestinians and Israelis are to negotiate a two-phase peace agreement starting

with a five-year period of self-rule. Negotiations on the final status of both areas would start after three years from the start of self-rule.

Dr. Ashrawi said the Palestinian team gave Israeli negotiators a three-point document asserting the relevance of U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 during the two phases and insisting that any action on the ground not affect negotiations for the lasting settlement.

"In the spirit of good faith and for the sake of parity, mutuality and mutual respect... we have decided that in order to break through the impasse we will accept the discussion of each issue separately on its own merits," Dr. Ashrawi said.

Israeli-Lebanese and Israeli-Jordanian negotiations are virtually on hold.

The Lebanese are apparently waiting to see what happens in the Israeli-Syrian talks while Jordan is awaiting developments in the Israeli-Palestinian talks.

Over the past month, during this sixth round of U.S.-sponsored talks in Washington, the talks have occasionally shown

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Sharif Zeid holds talks with Arabiyat

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Tuesday called at Parliament and held talks with Lower House Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat on arrangements for receiving His Majesty King Hussein, who returns home Thursday. Dr. Arabiyat told Petra he discussed with the prime minister a House's Agricultural Committee report on problems facing farmers. They also discussed a report of the Public Freedoms Committee and a

request by the committee members to meet with the prime minister. On the arrest of the two deputies, Laith Shbeilat and Yacoub Qarash, Dr. Arabiyat stressed that the law will have its say on it. Asked if the House's ordinary session will start as scheduled, Dr. Arabiyat said he does not expect that it will start at the beginning of next month. However, he noted, the issue will be discussed after His Majesty's return.



Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker

Rabin says talks with Syria should be at a higher level

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Tuesday roller-coaster talks with Syria would achieve little unless they were held at a higher level.

Mr. Rabin told parliament's foreign affairs and defence committee that Syria had not yet shown willingness to make full peace with the Jewish state.

"Therefore I believe that large-scale decisions would be difficult to achieve at the current level (of talks)," a committee official quoted Mr. Rabin as saying.

"If the process continues it will have to be at other levels," Mr. Rabin said.

Israeli officials are currently holding a sixth round of talks with delegations from Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians in Washington.

The Israeli-Syrian meetings opened with a flurry of unexpectedly upbeat statements by the Israeli but by last Thursday Syria said the talks were at an impasse.

Pressure by the talks' sponsor,

the United States, helped ensure both sides resumed meetings Monday.

Mr. Rabin did not refer to Israeli media reports last week that the U.S. and Egypt were working to arrange a meeting between the Israeli leader and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad.

Senior Western diplomatic sources said such a summit was out of the question for the time being.

They noted that Mr. Rabin favoured secret bilateral contacts of the kind that led to an Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty in 1979 which was based on a land-for-peace exchange.

Mr. Rabin has tried through a series of statements this month to persuade Israelis that they will have to hand back part of the Golan Heights to achieve peace with Damascus, Golan settlers, many from Mr. Rabin's own Labour Party, are marching this week from the strategic plateau to occupied Jerusalem as part of a campaign against a land-for-peace deal.

Mr. Rabin, who took office in July promising to speed up negotiations, said Monday any deadlock in the talks could threaten war in the Middle East.

"If we reach a standstill, a standstill sooner or later could lead to... the dangers of war," he said in a speech near Tel Aviv.

Israel insists that Syria commit itself to a "full peace," including diplomatic relations and open borders, before talks can begin on returning the Golan Heights.

"It will take time. There will be ups and downs," Mr. Rabin told reporters on emerging from the committee meeting.

"The Syrian interpretation as of today is a cessation of the state of war and recognition of recognised and secure borders. The Syrian interpretation does not include the element of peace," Mr. Rabin told the committee.

Israel has fabricated hopes of a peace breakthrough with Syria to divide the Arab side in the peace talks and stall negotiations until

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U.N. chemical team starts new inspection in Iraq

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — The latest team of U.N. arms experts visiting Iraq took a helicopter Tuesday to inspect a site near the Jordanian border, U.N. sources said.

The six-member team headed by Swiss expert Bernhard Brunner is trying to check whether the Iraqis surrendered for destruction all the weapons from their chemical arsenal.

The team left their Baghdad hotel in the early morning in an air-conditioned bus.

Mr. Brunner refused to answer reporters' questions on his exact destination but a source at the United Nations special commission in Baghdad said the team boarded a U.N. helicopter at Rasheed airport, east of Baghdad and flew to a site close to the Jordanian border.

Mr. Brunner and his team arrived in Baghdad Monday to check that chemical munitions had been moved from their storage areas for destruction at Iraq's main Muthana chemical weapons facility, 130 kilometres northwest of Baghdad.

The U.N. has designated Muthana as the site for destroying chemical weapons under the terms of the Gulf war ceasefire.

The Iraqis have dumped between 30,000 and 40,000 bombs, rockets and shells there but U.N. experts say thousands more are still at other chemical facilities around the country.

Under U.N. supervision, the Iraqis have constructed two plants in Muthana. The first, to incinerate mustard gas, is due to begin operation within two months, and the second, to neutralise nerve agents, is due to start next week.

Mr. Brunner said Monday he would not reveal the sites he intended to visit until he had talked to the Iraqis.

Assets may be seized

An Iraqi opposition leader said that the Security Council might soon authorise the United Nations to seize some of Iraq's \$4 billion to aid Kurds and Shiite Muslims.

Laith Kubba, spokesman for the London-based Iraqi national congress, said in a telephone interview that plans were being drawn for a new resolution to unfreeze a portion of funds.

Israeli policeman shot dead

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — A Palestinian dressed in an Israeli army uniform shot to death an off-duty Israeli policeman who stopped him for questioning Tuesday in Arab East Jerusalem, police said.

The assailant fled the scene, but police spokesman Shmuel Ben-Ruby said several Arabs were detained in the vicinity, one of whom is believed to be the attacker.

Israel Radio carried an interview with an unnamed policeman who said he caught the armed assailant as he was commanding a taxi which had a woman passenger accompanied by two children. The assailant is a resident of the occupied West Bank city of Jenin, the radio said.

An anonymous caller to an international news agency in occupied Jerusalem said the attack was the work of two military units of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas).

Witnesses said the man, wearing what appeared to be military clothes, fired a burst from an M-16 assault rifle. The Israeli policeman died instantly.

The caller said the attack was a joint effort of the Hamas military wing of Hamas and another group named for

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Mitterrand and Kohl seek to keep Europe unity drive alive

PARIS (Agencies) — Responding to the scepticism of French voters, President Francois Mitterrand and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl conferred for nearly two hours Tuesday on ways to keep alive the drive towards European unity.

Spokesman said beforehand that the two leaders, in their hastily arranged meeting, hoped to find ways of making the unification progress more open and democratic.

An expected press briefing after the talks was cancelled without explanation, and aides said no official statement would be issued.

Mr. Mitterrand, 75, underwent surgery Sept. 11, and his doctors disclosed five days later that he had prostate cancer. He voted Sunday in the referendum which gave a shaky 51 per cent majority to the Maastricht Treaty, but had not planned to return to work until Wednesday.

The strong vote against the treaty, which envisions economic and political union for the European Community (EC), has prompted even its most ardent supporters to suggest that the opponent's views must be taken seriously.

"We must make a better Europe, closer to the concerns of the French and other Europeans," Minister of European Affairs Elisabeth Guigou said in a newspaper interview published Tuesday.

She proposed a Europe that would be "less technocratic and more democratic, that takes into account daily concerns about social programmes, jobs, the environment, health."

French officials said the aim of the Paris Summit was to reaffirm the close Paris-Bonn partnership and show that Mr. Kohl and Mr. Mitterrand had heard the critical message of French voters.

They said the leaders were to discuss possible joint proposals for an emergency EC summit in Britain on Oct. 15 and 16.

The ideas included enhancing the Maastricht Treaty by giving citizens and parliaments a bigger say in EC affairs and spelling out the limits of the community's power, French officials said.

Hours before the talks, Denmark announced it would seek substantial additions to the Maastricht Treaty, which Danish voters narrowly rejected last June, and a new Danish referendum would be held next year.

And Germany announced it was pressing ahead with its parliamentary ratification procedure, beginning on Oct. 8 with the aim of finishing before the end of the year. Spain also said it would begin ratification next year.

British Prime Minister John Major, facing tough opposition from Eurosceptics in his own Conservative Party, irritated its EC partners Monday by calling for a rethink of the treaty and a pause to clarify Danish intentions.

French officials stressed there could be no renegotiation and said the best way out of the malaise was to accelerate, not slow down, the process of European unification.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said in an interview with Wirtschaftswoche: "Now the repair work for Denmark has to be done, because you cannot present the same text over and over for a vote until it finally gets a majority."

EC foreign ministers, meeting at U.N. headquarters in New York on Monday, pledged to go ahead with the Maastricht Treaty but papered over crucial differences on when to ratify the pact.

Rains threaten more chaos in Somalia

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — The rainy season is about to start in Somalia but this year it could be a curse rather than a blessing for millions of starving people.

The short rains are upon us. The health ramifications very serious," said Steve Tomlin, head of the International Medical Corps (IMC) team of American doctors.

The doctors threaten to spread diseases such as cholera and compound the problems of aid organisations already menaced by bandit attacks on relief convoys which have slowed the amount of food reaching the stricken interior.

Nobody knows how many people have died already but some aid workers fear up to half a million of Somalia's seven million people could perish unless U.N. troops can open land routes.

Estimates now range from

250,000 to half a million people dying before the end of the year," Mr. Tomlin said.

Usually Somalia offer prayers of thanks when the rain turns their biscuit-brown farmland green. But this year they have nothing to celebrate because they have no seed or tools.

They either ate their seeds or had it stolen together with their tools in the clan anarchy that followed the overthrow of dictator Mohammed Siad Barre in January 1991.

The drought has grisly implications to Baidoa, 250 kilometres northwest of Mogadishu, where up to 400 people are dying daily.

Grave diggers there weakened by hunger have buried thousands of corpses in soft river beds rather than in the rock hard ground around the town, and the rain could wash the corpses down

stream together with any diseases they might harbour.

"When the rains begin the corpses will be washed down the rivers... if we have cholera we will see a greater crisis than we already have," said Mr. Tomlin.

On Saturday, an International Red Cross food depot was looted amid heavy clan fighting in the western Somali town of Belet Huen as more U.N. troops arrived to protect other relief shipments.

Spokesman for two aid agencies said relief workers in Belet Huen were staying in their compounds and a decision would be made Tuesday on whether to evacuate them.

"The relief teams are just keeping their heads down," said Ben Foot of the Save the Children Fund of Britain.

About 15 foreign aid workers, plus scores of Somalis who work

only for food, are operating in Belet Huen.

It was not immediately clear how much food was stolen from the Red Cross compound. There were no reports of deaths or injuries.

Monday's raid "appears to be an argument between two clans over who controls the airport, who controls the offloading of goods," said Mr. Foot from his office in Nairobi, Kenya. "One faction apparently felt it wasn't getting its share of the goodies and decided to make its presence felt by raiding the warehouse."

In the Somali capital, Mogadishu, the main body of a 500-strong armed U.N. force from Pakistan began arriving Monday, charged with preventing similar attacks at the city's port and airport.

Aid workers disheartened, page 2

Kurd predicts wider success in latest anti-Baghdad effort

ANKARA (AP) — A gathering this week in northern Iraq of an array of religious and ethnic groups opposing the government of Saddam Hussein will agree to form a joint leadership, an Iraqi Kurdish leader has predicted.

Jalal Talabani, about to head back to Kurdish-held northern Iraq, also said he was confident that the latest bid to consolidate long-fractured opposition forces would otherwise meet with wider success than previous such meetings.

Although an exact date was not announced, Mr. Talabani said he expected the meeting to begin later this week in the Kurdish-held city of Erbil.

It will be the first time Iraqi opposition groups all gather on Iraqi soil.

"The conference is going to be a very big step towards uniting all Iraqi opposition," Mr. Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), said in an interview here Saturday night after winding up a nearly two-month tour of Western European capitals to seek support for the opposition.

A successful opposition conference could prove a significant step towards gaining Western faith in the ability of the opposition groups to eventually topple the government.

Mr. Talabani said the delegates would debate proposals for the enlargement of a 87-member assembly-in-exile and a 17-member executive council elected after an earlier conference held in Vienna in June.

Whether the assembly and

council really represent the Iraqi opposition has been in doubt because several opposition groups, backed by powerful Iraqi neighbours like Iran and Syria, boycotted the Vienna meeting. They included the Iran-based Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), an alliance of six Shiite factions.

The Talabani said delegates to this week's conference would include some representatives of exile groups in Europe, Iran and Syria.

They (the assembly and the executive council) will likely be doubled in size to include representatives of all Kurdish and Arab groups, Shiite or Sunni, secular or fundamentalist," Mr. Talabani said.

Perhaps more importantly, the conference would also decide on a proposed joint leadership or a "presidential committee," Mr. Talabani said.

He said Kurds prefer a more compact, three-member committee to go along with a seven or nine-member body, to be made up of at least two Kurds, two Sunni Iraqi Arab politicians and three Shiite leaders.

He expected Hojatoleslam Mohammad Bakr Al-Hakim, the leader of the Iran-based SCIRI faction, to be another member. There have been fears that the Shiites, should President Saddam be toppled, would push for the creation of an Iran-styled fundamentalist regime in Baghdad, Iraqi opposition leaders who visited Washington in July sought to ease Western worries that a

fundamentalist state could eventually develop in a post-Saddam Iraq.

Shiites make up 55 per cent of the Iraqi population. Kurdish sources say other joint-committee members could include Arif Abdul Razzak, a former Iraqi prime minister in exile in Cairo, Adib Al-Jader, president of the Geneva-based Arab Committee for Human Rights, and General Hasan Al-Naqib, living in Damascus.

Mr. Talabani said the Iraqi opposition were determined to produce a "viable alternative to Saddam Hussein to run a democratic Iraq."

Over the summer, Mr. Talabani met with U.S. officials in Washington along with other Iraqi opposition leaders. The lobbying eventually culminated with the declaration of a "no-fly" zone over southern Iraq.

U.S., British and French warplanes have been flying south of the 32nd Parallel daily to enforce the ban.

Kurds have established a de facto statelet in northern Iraq, with Erbil its effect serving as capital.

They gained control of the area bordering Turkey and Iran after a U.S.-led coalition force last year created a "security zone" in northern Iraq and Iraqi aircraft were barred from the north of the 36th Parallel.

Mr. Talabani urged expansion of the northern zone southward to include the oil city of Kirkuk. About one million of 3.5 million Iraqi Kurds live in Iraqi-held cities, including Kirkuk.



A Somali relief worker, armed with a stick, keeps the children in an orderly line in Mogadishu while they await their ration of food.

Disheartened aid workers, looking beyond Somalia, fear for future

By Mort Rosenblum
The Associated Press

MOGADISHU — Mario Neri, a penniless pediatrician, has spent his life helping the world's most desperate kids. After a season in Somalia, however, he fears that his is a lost cause.

"This thing called the 'international community' can never respond to calamities like this," he said. "There is too little coordination, too much self-interest and politics."

Dr. Neri, from Vincenza, Italy, reflected a view that is disheartening a broad range of aid workers as they battle uphill to save millions of Somalis from starvation.

When Ethiopia was ravaged in 1984 by famine — but not war and looting — celebrity rockers united to sing the benefit anthem "We are the World." This time around, Dr. Neri, among others, believes "the world" has given up.

Bernard Kouchner, French health minister and a humanitarian crusader, was asked on camera during a visit to the stricken town of Baldoia why "the world" had not done more to help. He exploded in frustration.

"Since Biafra, since Ethiopia, it is the same," he said, his voice rising. "We should either help or stop bothering to pretend. Rich people go on vacation, go about their lives, and do nothing."

Against a backdrop of dying infants, he shouted: "It's not only the United Nations and international organizations, but rich people everywhere, people who are bursting with wealth, who do nothing."

Governments defend their record by citing dollars spent and tonnes donated, and United Nations officials say requests for food were quickly matched by pledges.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has delivered more than 100,000 tonnes of food to Somalia, and has pledged \$150 million to its Somalia operation.

The European Community (EC) and the United States have given about 150,000 tonnes of food since last year, and Washington has promised another 145,000 tonnes sometime after October. Other governments and organizations are pitching in as well.

But the same U.N. officials also say there is still no common approach to provide what is needed and to get it into the hands of those who need it.

Dr. Neri, now 38, has spent 12 years as an unpaid volunteer in Africa learning the hard way.

"It's not enough for Western countries to give the food," he said. "They have to figure out how and where the food must be delivered. The situation is getting worse and worse... most countries want to do things their own way, and the result is a greater disaster."

Like Dr. Neri, aid workers said efforts must be made early, before people reach the final stages of desperation. Most agree that successive disasters have strained compassion to the limit but have yet to force major donors to coordinate their efforts.

"We were all very late," said Willard Weeks, regional director for Save the Children, a aid veteran. He shares Dr. Neri's view that the same mistakes are made over and over again.

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U.S., Israel negotiate closer military ties

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States and Israel are discussing a major military cooperation package to compensate Israel for the planned sale of 72 U.S. jet fighters to Saudi Arabia, a senior Bush administration official said Monday.

The package could include stockpiling U.S. air-to-air missiles in Israel and providing the Israelis with sophisticated early-warning radars and other arms, according to the official, who asked not to be identified.

The New York Times reported recently that negotiations were underway on such a package following President George Bush's announcement early this month that he supported the sale of the sophisticated F-15 fighters to Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia is still officially at war with Israel and the sale raised strong protests from Israel and some members of Congress, who accused Mr. Bush of fuelling the Middle East arms race despite his call for weapons-producing nations to clamp down on such sales.

"We (Americans and Israelis) are looking at four or five different categories of things," the administration official told Reuters. "It basically comes back to the proposition of our wanting to maintain their qualitative edge and help them address their most serious security concerns."

The official said one category included the storage of U.S. arms such as air-to-air missiles carried by fighter jets and the latest Patriot anti-aircraft missiles in Israel. He said tanks had also been discussed "but I don't think that's likely to go anywhere."

"It would be the case that we (U.S.) would need in a crisis in the Middle East — that we could draw on if we had to go back to the Gulf — or that if Israel got into difficulty in another conflict we would grant access to," the official said.

He said other cooperation under discussion by several joint working groups from the two countries included:

— Getting Israel more closely involved in the planned U.S. global protection system from missile attack, perhaps providing very sophisticated early warning radars to tie in with Israel's planned "Arrow" anti-missile missile system.

— Giving more U.S. arms for Israel under a \$700 million "draw down" deal approved by Congress which allows the Pentagon to provide sophisticated equipment which it no longer needs to Israel.

— Possibly allowing Israel to use a greater part of its \$1.8 billion in annual U.S. foreign military aid to develop its own weaponry rather than buy American equipment.

"One of Israel's major problems is the ballistic missile threat. It's growing by leaps and bounds, and helping them deal with that is one of our major priorities and something we are very happy to try to work with them on," said the official.

"We might have arrangements in a crisis for us to deploy theatre missile defences to Israel... that's a category of concern that we are working on," the official added.

The official refused to say whether the administration had put any pressure on the Saudis to publicly abandon the Arab trade boycott of Israel or to make official peace with Israel.

"I think there is reason to believe the Saudis have not been enforcing the boycott for some period of time now, anyway," he said.

... do I think, they (Saudis) check passports anymore to see whether or not the holder of the passport has been to Israel. I think they sort of quietly backed away from some of the onerous practices of the past. But you would have to ask them that."

Schwarzkopf: Going after Saddam meant quagmire

NEW YORK (AP) — Invading Baghdad to topple Saddam Hussein would have bogged down the United States in a quagmire "like the dinosaur in the tar pit," according to Gulf war commander H. Norman Schwarzkopf.

"The legitimacy for what we were doing was the United Nations resolution which called for us to kick the Iraqis out of Kuwait," the retired four-star general said in an interview for "Newsweek on Air" carried by the Associated Press radio network.

"We never considered going to Baghdad... we'd accomplished our mission," said Gen. Schwarzkopf, who headed the U.S.-led war to drive Iraq from Kuwait.

Gen. Schwarzkopf also defends the decision in his forthcoming biography, "It Doesn't Take a Hero." He also complains in the book of being pressured by Bush administration "hawks" he said had seen too many war movies and wanted to rush coalition forces into battle before they were ready.

"The increasing pressure to launch the ground war early was making me crazy," he wrote. "There had to be a contingent of hawks in Washington who did not want to stop until we'd punished Saddam. We'd been bombing Iraq for more than a month, but it wasn't good enough. These were guys who had seen John Wayne in the Green Berets," they'd see "Rambo," they'd see "Patton," and it was very easy for them to pound their desks and say, 'By God, we've got to go in there. Gotta punch that son of a bitch.' Of course, none of them was going to get shot at."

Geo. Schwarzkopf does not identify the administration hawks or say whether they were reflecting the wishes of President Bush, whom he praises.

Iran: Intruder planes will be shot down

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's air force commander has warned that aircraft violating Iranian airspace will be shot down, Tehran Radio reported.

The radio said Brigadier General Mansour Sattari issued the warning "in connection with recent developments relating to possible adventures in the region," apparently a reference to a dispute over Abu Musa Island in the Gulf.

"Iran's air force will proceed with greater vigilance, and any aircraft that violates Iran's air space will be forced to make an emergency landing and, if necessary, shot at," Gen. Sattari was quoted as saying.

Abu Musa, near the strategic Strait of Hormuz, has been controlled jointly by Iran and Sharjah, one of the seven United Arab Emirates (UAE), since it was occupied by Iran in 1971.

Earlier this month, Tehran announced it had sole sovereignty, a move denounced by the UAE and neighbouring Arab states.

A senior UAE official was quoted Monday as saying his country will carry the dispute to the United Nations.

Iran has claimed that the controversy has been blown out of proportion as a result of an American plot to create discord between Iran and its Arab neighbours.

The air force commander's warning also falls against the backdrop of the U.S.-led aerial exclusion zone in southern Iraq, which is policed from bases in Saudi Arabia and a U.S. carrier in the Gulf. Iran opposes the presence of Western forces in the region.

Tehran Radio reported that Gen. Sattari also said Iran is now self-sufficient in airplane parts.

"We are in the process of strengthening the defensive base of the country's air force and, fortunately, we now have all the facilities and resources we require," he said.

"The logistical policy of the air force has always been to avoid reliance on external and foreign sources for spare parts. All the equipment required for air force planes is now made in the country by Iranian specialists. We have the necessary resources for the next 15 years," Gen. Sattari said.

The Iranian air force was plagued during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war with chronic shortages of spares.

Earlier this year, Gen. Sattari disclosed that Iran now has Soviet-made MIG-29 interceptors and SU-24 fighter-bombers and Chinese F-7 fighters.

U.S. government believes Sudan executed its employee

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sudan is believed to have executed a U.S. government employee on charges of treason despite strong American objections, the State Department said Monday.

Press Officer Joseph Snyder said the United States had expressed grave concern to the Sudanese government over the incident.

Andrew Tombe, 34, was the senior Sudanese employee of the Agency for International Development in the southern city of Juba, stronghold of a rebel movement which has been at war with the government in Khartoum.

The basis of the State Department's concern was unclear since Snyder had no information to refute the Sudanese government's claims that Mr. Tombe was a rebel militant.

U.S. relations with the Sudan have been poor ever since a military coup led by Islamic fundamentalists ousted a democratic government several years ago. During the Gulf war, the Sudan supported Iraq.

The administration has suspended the regular U.S. aid programme but continues a large-scale programme to feed

Sudanese affected by the country's prolonged drought.

"Given the continuing allegations about human rights abuses in Sudan, particularly in Juba and the government's delay in responding to our repeated requests for information about Mr. Tombe, we are viewing this incident with the gravest concern," Mr. Snyder said. Sudan's ambassador was unavailable for comment.

Other U.S. officials said other Sudanese employees of the U.S. government have been detained as well and that Sudanese authorities seized U.S. government property in Juba.

Because of the fighting, the only safe means of going to Juba is via air but the officials said the Sudanese government has refused permission for U.S. diplomats to board flights to the region.

Mr. Snyder said the administration was strongly reiterating its request for the Sudanese government to allow American staff to visit Juba to investigate the events leading to Mr. Tombe's execution and to check on the well-being of the other Sudanese employees.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Italian MPs to assess situation in Iraq

BAGHDAD (R) — Six Italian members of parliament (MPs) arrived in Baghdad Monday to assess the situation in Iraq and tell government officials they are against a long U.N. embargo. "We're here to know the true situation in the country and to meet the representatives of government and parliament and U.N.," Roberto Formigoni, a Christian Democrat, told reporters. Mr. Formigoni said he was heading a delegation of the lawmakers and 34 other personalities representing various political and humanitarian groups in Italy. He said the issue of international trade sanctions imposed on Iraq in response to its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait would be put to motion in the Italian parliament in October. "We are representatives of 88 members of the Italian parliament (who) signed a motion against the embargo," the lawmakers said. It is the first fact-finding mission since the Baghdad government last month invited Western parliaments to come and see for themselves after the Gulf war allies clamped a no-fly zone on much of Iraq's south.

Opposition claims large demonstration in Tehran

NICOSIA (AP) — The leading Iranian opposition group said scores of people were wounded and almost 20 arrested Monday in clashes between anti-government protesters and security forces in southern Tehran. A crowd of more than 1,000 people burned a municipal building and a police station in the Yaf Abad district after the government demolished about 100 unauthorised homes; said the Mujahadeen-e-Khalq. Nineteen people were arrested and reinforcements were sent to the district by Revolutionary Guards security forces after the burning of the municipal building and three nearby vehicles. Mujahadeen spokesman Ali Safavi said by telephone from the group's Paris headquarters. Clashes continued Monday night, Mr. Safavi said.

UAE president to finance Islamic centre

RABAT (R) — The President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan, has agreed to finance construction of a new headquarters for the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO). In a statement on Monday, ISESCO Director Abdul Aziz Othman Al Twaijri said the new building would be erected on 12,000 square metres of land in Rabat donated by King Hassan of Morocco. No cost estimate for the project was given. ISESCO was founded by the 39-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference. Sheikh Zayed left Rabat Monday at the end of an extended private visit after conferring with the Moroccan monarch Friday.

Archaeologists to assess Beirut ruins

PARIS (AP) — A team of archaeologists will go to Lebanon next month to assess what steps are needed to save ancient ruins that could be endangered during Beirut's post-war reconstruction, UNESCO announced Monday. The U.N. agency said archaeologists believe they have found the remains of an ancient Greek colonial settlement in central Beirut, buried underneath remains of a Roman-Byzantine city which is itself several metres below the modern city. The ancient ruins found as bulldozers cleared away rubble from the long civil war that wracked Beirut, UNESCO said. The team to be sent in October will make selective searches to determine which ruins should be preserved as part of a comprehensive preservation plan before the reconstruction proceeds too far.

Israeli army captain given 70 days in jail

TEL AVIV (AP) — The army sentenced a captain to 70 days in jail for taking a military jeep on a jaunt to an Arab village, then abandoning it after being stoned by Palestinian youths, a newspaper reported Monday. The punishment was considered harsh, and the daily Haaretz quoted senior officers as saying the flight from stones by the captain and two of his soldiers was one of the most disgraceful acts in the 4½-year Palestinian uprising. The captain, a commander of a tank company, took the two soldiers on the needless tour of the village of Qarawat Bani Zeid in the West Bank Saturday, Haaretz said.

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19:00 News in French
19:15 Intertopique
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Saved by the Bell
21:00 Wednesday from Chicago
21:30 News in English
22:00 News in English
22:20 Red Fox

PRAYER TIMES

05:00 Fajr
06:30 (Sunrise) Duha
12:20 Dhur
15:54 'Asr
18:37 Maghrib
19:54 Isha

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Assembly of God Church, Tel. 637785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590, Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
Dr. In Sale Church Tel. 661757
Terzante Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 685326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811255

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 650232

Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be fair and winds will be westerly light to moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

Amman Min./Max. temp. 12/27

Aqaba 21/33

Dezora 11/29

Jordan Valley 19/34

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 27, Aqaba 32, Humidity readings: Amman 32 per cent, Aqaba 39 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Fahri Tach 885880

Dr. Babji Badir 849362

Dr. Parout Noor 786580

First pharmacy 638591

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asena pharmacy 637025

Nat Salem pharmacy 636720

Yacoub pharmacy 644645

Shamsi pharmacy 637660

Naironh pharmacy 626772

Najra pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Abdul Majid Mousa 275393

Al Sharaa pharmacy 275825

ZARQA:

Dr. Izadine Mousa 985417

Dr. Omar Mousa 995119

KARAK:

Dr. Omar Mousa 32170

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Response 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 891228

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 942402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630221

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints 871467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repair 623101

Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 81381332

Palestinians decide to 'accept the discussion of each issue on its own merit' to break the impasse

Special from Washington

Palestinian spokesperson Hanan Ashrawi said Monday that the Palestinians presented the Israeli side with a document that intends to address the issues of priority for both sides. The document is based on the U.S. letters of assurances and the invitations as the governing principles of all negotiations in the peace process, she said. She explained that since the Palestinian side could not get an agreement from the Israelis on the framework proposal or on the agenda, and in order to break the impasse, the Palestinian team decided to "accept the discussion of each issue on its own merit."

Dr. Ashrawi noted that the Palestinian negotiators had "extracted from both agendas several subjects that were issues of priority" in order to form a common ground and a bridging device that would be acceptable to both sides. These include:

- The goals or objectives of the negotiations and the terms of reference.
- The concept of the interim self-government authority (ISGA) and arrangements.
- Elections.

Dr. Ashrawi said the Palestinian team was willing to add jurisdiction of the ISGA, legislation, and the issue of human rights at a later stage, and is willing to continue to explore ways and means of finding common ground as well as mechanisms for negotiations.

Monday's morning session centered on these issues, she said, adding that there was a reaching of the Palestinian document followed by an Israeli response to the framework agreement presented by the Palestinians.

"Needless to say, the response continues to be entirely unsatisfactory, and we have agreed that we will continue exploring these issues tomorrow," she said.

Asked if this new strategy

meant that the Palestinian side has agreed to start from the "bottom up" as the U.S. wants them to, Dr. Ashrawi replied in the negative. "We will present our own unifying principles which are the terms of reference of the peace process, and then we will discuss substantive issues and subjects that are issues of priority for both sides. So instead of continuing the tug-of-war, where the Israelis would insist that we negotiate only on their terms of reference and on the basis of their proposal, and we would insist that they reaffirm and adhere to the principles of the negotiations, we said we will extract these subjects in common. That would form, in a sense neutral territory," she explained.

Commenting on the scheduling of the next round, how the U.S. elections play into the process, and whether the Palestinian team would prefer to hold off until after the elections, Dr. Ashrawi asserted that the Palestinian side is willing to resume another round following the Jewish holidays, adding that while the American elections "do influence the peace process," the negotiators hope that the peace process has a life of its own and that the U.S. policy commitment is not subject to the elections.

In response to a question about possible Israeli stalling, Dr. Ashrawi described the Israeli negotiators as being "quite entrenched" in their position which was presented by the earlier government.

"There is a constant repetition of the same themes and the same approach and the same mechanisms," she maintained. Dr. Ashrawi added that the Palestinian side has been trying "in different ways to try to achieve a breakthrough" and hopes that "this last attempt in terms of defining neutral terrain or issues in common would enable a real breakthrough to take place."

When asked about Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's announcement on Monday — that U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 are the basis of negotiations — she replied that the Palestinian side understands that 242 is applicable to all fronts as a basis of negotiation, adding that there have been "discrepancies" between Israeli public statements and their positions in the negotiating room. Even within that broad commitment, she said, the Israelis still insist that Resolution 242 does not apply to the interim phase or to negotiations with the Palestinians. That, she maintained, is no change in the Israeli negotiating position.

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Arabs, Israel try to put talks on track

(Continued from page 1)

Israel's Tourism Minister Uzi Baram, making a rare public appearance by an Israeli official in Cairo, said Tuesday he believed occupied Jerusalem should remain the "undivided capital" of the Jewish state.

Mr. Baram said occupied Jerusalem would continue to be his country's top tourist destination. He was answering reporters' questions after addressing the annual conference of the American Society of Travel Agents, the world tourism industry's largest gathering. About 5,000 travel agents are attending.

No major government recog-

nizes Israel's claim to Jerusalem and the issue has caused continual friction at the peace talks. "Even though I am one of the leaders of the dovish wing of the Israeli Labour Party, I was born and grew up in Jerusalem. I think Jerusalem has to be the capital of Israel and it has to be united," Mr. Baram said.

Israel's high profile team at the conference used its peace with Egypt to present an upbeat vision of a future Middle East with free travel and open borders.

"I regret the ministers from Syria and Jordan declined to attend this gathering... and I hope to meet them in the future," Mr. Baram told the conference.

Baz: No Arab military intervention

(Continued from page 1)

Egypt and Iran have no diplomatic relations. Iran severed ties in 1979 in protest over Egypt's peace treaty with Israel. Last year, the two countries reopened interest sections.

Asked what it would take for Egypt to restore full diplomatic representation with Iran, Dr. Baz said Tehran would have to refrain from interfering in any Arab country's internal affairs or spread its influence in the area.

Sources close to the Mubarak-Sheikh Zayed talks said the UAE, which has been embarrassed by the fervor with which Egyptian newspapers have rallied to its side against Iran, wanted to play the dispute down and reach a settlement through quiet diplomacy.

The dispute has raised tension with Tehran at a time when the small Gulf oil states have still not worked out a common defence

strategy.

One source said the UAE had been puzzled when Iran suddenly renewed its claims to sovereignty over Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tumb Islands and virtually annexed Abu Musa.

He said Egypt had urged the UAE to reconstruct the precise course of events leading up to the crisis. It had to establish "for instance, whether there was any truth in Iranian accusations that 'suspicious foreigners' had been found on boats near the strategically-placed islands."

Asked about reports that the UAE wanted to take its dispute with Iran to international arbitration, Dr. Baz said: "We are currently in the stage of knowing the truth about what happened and the Iranian intentions."

He warned Iran that it could not solve the dispute by military force and declared: "We will not accept any deal that does not safeguard Arab rights."

Syrian press briefing

In her opening statement, Sy-

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

Israeli police shot and killed

(Continued from page 1)

Yasser Namrou, a 28-year-old Palestinian killed by Israeli troops in the occupied Gaza Strip two months ago.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who took office two months ago, promising to accelerate Middle East peace talks under way in Washington this week, blamed "terrorist elements" but said they would not deter Israel's drive for peace.

Security sources said it was the first time in at least a decade that Palestinian nationalists had shot an Israeli policeman in the Holy City.

Israeli security forces have voiced alarm at a rise in gun attack by Palestinians.

Arabs have killed 97 Israelis since the start of the Palestinian uprising in 1987. Israelis have killed 930 Arabs.

Rabin: Talks should be at higher level

(Continued from page 1)

after the Nov. 3 U.S. presidential election, official Syrian newspapers said Tuesday.

The government-run Tishrin said Israel's latest stance was due to Arab determination for a settlement on all fronts, including a settlement for Palestinians in the Israeli occupied territories.

"The Israelis have thought that the current Arab situation would be a real chance to impose unilateral deals on Arab parties, but they were faced by their adherence to the principle of a comprehensive solution," Tishrin said.

It said Israel has "fabricated delusive news about making a breakthrough on the Syrian front, while matters on other fronts are still hanging, in a bid to sow doubt in the spirits of other Arab parties and to drag them into Israel's Bosom and to dictate its will on them."

Mr. Rabin told Israel's parliament Monday he hoped to make peace with Syria sooner than he first thought, perhaps in less than half a year.

Tishrin said the Israelis "have entered the American electoral battle against (President) Bush, betting on overthrowing him and undermining the peace process as well... they, therefore, are not in a hurry to bring any substantial

progress in peace negotiations."

Al Baath, organ of the ruling party of President Assad, said Israel was "releasing statements and playing with words that contradict fact and reality."

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TCC partially disconnects service to customers who failed to pay their bills

AMMAN (Petra) — The Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) has partially disconnected telephone services to 30,000 subscribers who have failed to pay their bills on time.

TCC Assistant Director General Adel Shamaileh said that in a matter of days, the TCC reconnected 10,000 telephones for subscribers who paid their dues. Two weeks are given to subscribers to pay their dues after they receive bills by post. If they fail to do so, they risk partial disconnection of the service, which means they can receive calls but not make them, said Dr. Shamaileh.

Should the subscribers still fail to respond 37 days after receiving the notifications, they risk losing their telephone subscriptions and they would have to submit new applications for new telephones and pay the required fees like new subscribers, said Dr. Shamaileh.

The TCC this month terminated its service to 2500 persons for failing to respond after the lapse of 37 days, he said.

Private subscribers in the Amman area are indebted to the TCC by JD 5 million and government departments are indebted by another JD 1 million, which

means that the TCC has to collect JD 6 million so as to continue to provide the telephone services regularly, according to Dr. Shamaileh.

The funds are needed by the TCC not only to continue its service but also to finance part of its projects, he said.

Dr. Shamaileh said that the TCC's five-year development and expansion plan which will increase telephone lines and modernising the present telephone networks in the Kingdom will cost JD 300 million.

"Normally, we issue bills and distribute them through the post offices around the country and normally 90 per cent of the subscribers pay their dues within the two-week period, he pointed out. Dr. Shamaileh said that unclear addresses, lack of sufficient post office boxes and negligence on the part of subscribers cause the delay in payment, thus prompting the TCC to partially sever and later disconnect telephone services.

He said 85 per cent of the subscribers receive their bills through post offices and 15 per cent receive them through other means like places of work and shops which explains why some of the bills arrive late.

While the TCC will continue its endeavours to ensure that the bills will arrive at their destination, it has no choice but to pursue the policy of severing the telephone services for subscribers who fail to pay their dues, Dr. Shamaileh added.

He said that subscribers can make their payments through the Jordan and Housing banks or through the TCC's centres in Amman and other governorates between the fifth and the 20th of each month.

He said, the TCC sends out teams of employees each day to collect the paid bills from the various banks so as to ensure fair treatment for all subscribers.

In the first half of the coming month, he said, the TCC will start applying the same method to all the other governorates where subscribers would have to pay their dues to the TCC on a monthly basis on equal footing with Amman residents.

Some subscribers who were standing in queues to pay their dues told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that they did not receive their bills through the post offices. Some said that they waited for four hours in order to pay their bills at the TCC centres.

Oman to host Jordanian cultural week

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will organise its first cultural week in the Omani capital of Muscat in the coming month in order to acquaint the Omani public with Jordanian culture and to bolster Jordanian-Omani cultural relations.

Ministry of Culture Secretary General Mohammad Amaich said that the Jordanian cultural week, which will open in Muscat on Oct. 3, will include three exhibitions: a paintings exhibition, an exhibition of embroidery and handicrafts, and an exhibition displaying books and publications issued by the Ministry of Culture or Jordanian publishing houses.

The event, he said, will include three lectures on "The University and the Modern Age," "Social Development in Jordan's Rural Regions," and "Cultural Life in Jordan." He said three Jordanian poets will recite also poetry.

Oman's Ambassador to Jordan Mohammad Ben Sultan told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that Jordanian-Omani relations are "unique and progressing all the time in the political, economic, cultural, educational and sports fields."



Jordanians dance on the streetside as part of the celebrations marking the recovery from illness of His Majesty King Hussein, who returns home Thursday (Photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)

Cypriot team due in Amman to sign trade agreement

AMMAN (Petra) — A trade team from Cyprus is due in Amman Wednesday to sign an agreement on expanding the volume of trade between Cyprus and Jordan.

Amman Chamber of Commerce officials said that the team, which represents the private industrial and services sectors in Cyprus, will conduct meetings with merchants and businessmen through the Amman Chamber of Commerce.

They said that the team will discuss steps to export Cypriot children's toys, construction materials, electric appliances, car parts, sanitary equipment, food stuffs, dyes, alarm systems, clothes and shoes to Jordan.

The Cypriot team will also display water pumps, cosmetics, electric turbines, electric cables and construction materials at the Amman Chamber of Commerce and hold meetings with industrialists.

The drums beat, bagpipes skirl as country prepares for King's return

By Rana Sabbagh

Reuter

AMMAN — The country is preparing "the celebration of all celebrations" to welcome His Majesty King Hussein home when he returns from cancer surgery in the United States.

Bedouin leaders from the provinces, with camels bought for ritual slaughter, have pitched their tents in Amman and hundreds of thousands of people are expected to pour into the streets to dance and wave banners when the 57-year-old monarch flies in from London on Thursday.

At night, the Arah drums are already beating and the bagpipes skirl as the tribesmen dance and sing the praises of their King and country. Some urban passers-by join in.

By day loudspeakers throughout the city blare out "Hashemi, Hashemi," a nationalist song celebrating the King's descent from Hashem, the great-grandfather of the Prophet Muhammad.

A welcoming committee headed by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker says up to a million people — one third of the

country's population — will line main streets decked with banners, posters and flags.

Children will have the day off school and government ministries and shops will close for a national holiday.

"Thursday will be the celebration of all celebrations," said Mideq Salem, a tribal leader sitting outside a typical bedouin tent set up on an Amman roadside.

His tribe, like tens of others who live in remote areas of the Kingdom and form the bedrock of support for King Hussein, have hurriedly pitched their goat and camel-hair tents on empty lots, where they offer passers-by coffee and sweets.

"We are swarming on the capital from all over the country to greet him," said Muhammad Fayed, a member of the 100,000-strong Bani Sakhr tribe from central Jordan.

"Believe me, no matter what we do, nothing is enough to match our happiness over his safe return and express our gratitude to God Almighty for keeping him for us," he said.

The fervour has also infected Jordanians of Palestinian origin,

including those in the refugee camps.

Banners have been hung in the camps welcoming back the King, who recently celebrated 40 years on the Throne.

King Hussein, who had a kidney removed at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota in mid-August, has asked Jordanians to make donations to charity rather than spend money on celebrations.

But in addition to a fund for the poor which has collected about JD 1 million, Jordanians are buying hundreds of sheep and camels to slaughter in the streets in traditional sacrificial gestures of thanksgiving.

Royal Air Force pilots in trainer and fighter aircraft will greet and escort the Royal plane, piloted by King Hussein himself, from the moment it enters Jordanian airspace.

Relatives and about 400 officials, including the Prime Minister, security leaders and dignitaries from the eight governorates will shake hands with the King at the airport.

King Hussein's doctors say he has made a full recovery.

Motorcade to pass through downtown, Third Circle and Jabal Hussein

AMMAN (J.T.) — A government committee preparing the official celebrations of His Majesty King Hussein's return home has said that the Royal motorcade of the King will proceed from Amman Airport in Marka to the Basman Palace, passing through downtown Amman, the Third and Fourth Circles in Jabal Amman and Jabal Hussein.

Secretary General of the Ministry of Interior Salameh Hammad, the committee's rapporteur, told Jordan Television on Tuesday that 53,000 students and 2500 scouts will gather along the road from the airport, waving portraits of the King and national flags.

According to Mr. Hammad special areas along the route of the King's motorcade will be designated for representatives of different governorates of the Kingdom.

Panel urges women to assume more active role in political life

By Cosima Hadidi

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The law gives Jordanian women the right to vote, to run for parliamentary elections, and to participate in various aspects of public life, yet most Jordanian women choose not to participate in public activities, especially in politics; this way the key issue for debate at an open panel Monday evening.

The panel discussed the reasons behind this and suggested possible solutions. The panel, entitled "The Importance of the Participation of Women in Political Decision Making," was organised by the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) and consisted of Ms. Nadia Alloul, Ms. Asma Khader, Ms. Wijdan Saket and Ms. Abla Abu-Obeid.

The panel spoke to an audience of about 150 people about the importance of women's participation in politics, since the laws that are passed by policy makers affect women as well as men.

"Laws are created to protect

the rights of those who make them," said Ms. Khader. "If everyone participates in politics, then everyone's rights will be protected," she said, adding that before parliamentary elections were held in November 1989, virtually all decision makers in the country were men. "Even today, with few exceptions, all the high government positions are occupied by men, including the judicial system where no female judge was ever appointed," Ms. Khader said.

Ms. Saket said that in order to increase women's participation in public life, better organisation and pressure groups are needed. "Since there is no female quota for appointments to (the Upper House of parliament) Senate, women should try to participate in it," she said. Ms. Saket also quoted statistics that showed the high level of education and literacy among Jordanian women, who constitute almost half the population. In 1989, and for the first time, Jordanian women had the right to vote and run for parliamentary elections, yet none of

the 12 women that ran was elected.

While this shows a willingness on the part of a number of Jordanian women to actively participate in politics, it also shows that the society is not ready yet to endorse this participation, she said.

Ms. Abu Obeid said that it was wrong to see women as victims of society, because that implies inactivity on their part. "Jordanian women have been asking for their political rights since the founding of the Kingdom," she said. She said that it was important for women to earn their rights based upon their own needs and capabilities.

This view was endorsed by Ms. Saket, who said that Jordanian women had never waited for their rights to be given to them, but have taken them themselves. Following the presentation by the panelists, a lively audience debate raised issues ranging from gender disparities to child rights reflecting the wide range of ideologies present in the audience.

Jewish settlers continue to occupy homes in Arab Jerusalem

AMMAN (Petra) — Department of Palestinian Affairs at the Foreign Ministry reported Tuesday that 15 Jewish families last month occupied seven Arab homes in Arab Jerusalem in a bid to increase the Jewish presence in the holy city and gradually evict Arab inhabitants.

The department quoted Arabic daily newspapers published in the occupied territories as denying rumours that the Arabs were selling their homes to Israelis in Jerusalem, saying that "the Arabs were not selling anything and the homes were being confiscated by force by settlers opposed to the Middle East peace process."

In the past month, the Israeli authorities confiscated 1448 units of Arab land in the West Bank and Gaza, thus raising to 1 million dunams the total area of land confiscated by the Israelis since the 1967 occupation of the Arab land, the department said in statement.

The department quoted state-

ments by the Israeli Peace Now movement and the Jerusalem Information Centre as saying that the present Labour government in Israel was trying to raise the number of Israeli Jews settling in Arab Jerusalem to 160,000 in two years.

The statement said that the Peace Now movement believes that the Israeli settlers are being encouraged in their practices by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin government's failure to live up to its pledges to halt the settlement programmes. Furthermore, it said, the Israeli authorities have been helping the settlers by building roads and laying the necessary infrastructure to help expand present settlements built on Arab lands.

It said that the public freedoms and human rights of Palestinians in the occupied territories are being continuously violated. In the past month, 154 Palestinians, from the West Bank and Gaza were put on trial before military courts and sentenced to periods

ranging from several months to several years. Furthermore, the department said the Israeli authorities last month demolished 23 Arab homes, sealed off six others, killed seven Arab citizens and injured hundreds of others in clashes with the local Arab population.

"Search campaigns are continuing and they cover refugee camps, villages and towns where Israeli detain Palestinian youth for resisting occupation measures or failing to pay the heavy taxes," said the statement.

At least 23 Arab youths have died during torture in Israeli jails since 1968, said the department. It said that various forms of torture are being applied against Arab detainees who are treated in an inhuman manner and deprived of their basic human rights.

The statement said that curfews are imposed from time to time on towns and refugee camps and the demolishing of homes is continuing unabated.

Seminar emphasises viability of industrial subcontracting

AMMAN (J.T.) — Industry and Trade Minister Abdullah Ensour Tuesday stressed the importance of the work of teams involved in industrial subcontracting to boost cooperation in industrial fields among Arab countries and with the world at large.

The minister who was addressing members of a steering committee formed by a three-day seminar on industrial subcontracting in the Arab region, said that such meetings should be intensified so as to arrive at the desired objectives.

Members of the steering committee earlier held a two-day meeting at the Regency Palace Hotel in Amman to review the outcome of the seminar which was attended by delegates from Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.

The seminar on industrial subcontracting in the Arab World was held between Sept. 19 and 21.

The event, organised within the framework of a project for the development of an Arab subcontracting system was financed by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO).

According to sources at the Ministry of Industry, UNIDO is carrying out a number of similar programmes for the promotion of subcontracting in developing nations all over the world with the objective of introducing successful industrial management techniques and stimulating new forms of cooperation among small-scale industries.

Subcontracting is widely used in Europe, Japan and the United States to maximise productivity and manufacturing flexibility in order to cope with a rapidly changing market demand while ensuring the fastest possible return of investments," the officials added.

The ministry officials said subcontracting agreements are reached mostly between medium-size, large industrial enterprises and smaller specialised companies for the supply of parts to be incorporated in the final products.

Participants at the seminar, which was conducted by a team of UNIDO experts, included managers and staff members of industrial firms in Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan.

Jordan, Syria sign telecommunications agreement

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Syria Tuesday signed an agreement on regional communications linkage to ensure expanded communications services with the outside world.

An official statement following the signing of the agreement said that the project entails laying communications cables through Damascus, Dera in Syria to Ramtha and Amman. The Syrian side is currently executing its part of the project between Damascus and Dera, and the two sides will connect the Dera-Ramtha stretch of the cable, which will be linked to Amman.

Under the agreement, each country will cover the cost of the cables laid in its territory.

The agreement was signed by Minister of Post and Communications Jamal Sarairoh and his Syrian counterpart Mohammad Martini Tuesday sign an agreement to link the two countries' telecommunications networks (Petra photo)

moves aimed at competing the process of integration in communications fields between Jordan and Syria and then with the other Arab countries.

Mr. Nawawi and Mr. Obaid earlier conducted talks aimed at boosting cooperation in telecommunications fields.

They discussed increasing the number of telephone channels between Amman and Damascus, saying that the linkage would



Minister of Post and Communications Jamal Sarairoh (right) and his Syrian counterpart Mohammad Martini Tuesday sign an agreement to link the two countries' telecommunications networks (Petra photo)

enable the two countries to boost their communications with the outside world. They also discussed the mechanism for the implementation of the agreement. It was announced Tuesday also that Mr. Nawawi will go to Damascus Wednesday to take part in the 63rd meeting of the board of directors of the Arab Satellite Communications Organisations due to start in the Syrian capital Thursday.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Amaireh attends cultural week

AMMAN (Petra) — Secretary General of the Ministry of Culture Mohammad Naji Amaireh left Amman for Spain Tuesday to participate in the activities of the second Jordanian cultural week held as part of the Seville International Expo activities. Mr. Amaireh said the week, which will be held from Sept. 23-30, will include seminars and lectures on cultural relations between Jordan and Spain, relations between the Arabs and Andalusia and the direct impact of the Arab-Islamic presence in Andalusia on the Arab civilisation.

Jordan, Australia sign air transport agreement

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation representing the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) returned to Amman from Sydney Tuesday after a week-long visit to Australia during which it conducted talks with officials from the Australian Civil Aviation Authority. CAA Director General Ahmad Juweibir, who headed the delegation, said the two sides initiated an agreement on air transport between Jordan and Australia and discussed scopes of cooperation in civil aviation. According to the agreement, Mr. Juweibir said, the two sides will operate flights between the two countries. Based on this, the Royal Jordanian (RJ), will open a direct route linking Amman with Sydney to serve Jordanian and Arab expatriates in Australia, he said.

Ruweished named Al Karameh

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was issued Tuesday naming the border post linking Jordan with Iraq Al Karameh. The old name of the post was Ruweishid.

Committee expresses concern over Vatican-Israeli detente

AMMAN (Petra) — A Joint Islamic-Christian committee Tuesday expressed deep concern over the Vatican's announcement that it was forming a committee to normalise relations with Israel. The Islamic Christian Committee appealed to Pope John Paul II to reconsider this sudden detente with Israel despite its occupation of Jerusalem.

In a message to the Pope, the committee said the normalisation of relations between the Vatican and Israel will give Israel a chance to politically exploit the Vatican's position.

It said that any dialogue between Israel and the Vatican will definitely affect the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

WHAT'S ON

★ Exhibition entitled "A Dialogue in Expression" — works on paper by Naz Karamallah, Nabila Hilmi and Dodi Taban at the National Gallery, Jahl Luweldah Park.

★ Exhibition entitled "The Horizon" by Artist Qasim Al Samir and Najah Al Rabi' at the Housing Bank Gallery.

★ Exhibition of paintings and ceramics by Iraqi artists Bahija Al - Hakem and Sajidah Al Mashaykhee, at Alla Art Gallery.

★ Art exhibition by Turkish artist Sahabat at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of sculpture and enamel on copper by Mustafa Ali and Sheren Malla at Beladina Art Gallery.



ARABIAN NIGHT AT MARRIOTT: Under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bent Al Hussein and Mr. Mohammad Al Saleh, the Amman Marriott Hotel hosted a memorable Arabian night at the London Marriott Hotel, in cooperation with Royal Jordanian and the London Marriott International sales. The purpose of the event was to boost tourism in the Kingdom. Twenty incentive and conference organisers attended a presentation about Jordan delivered by the director of sales at the Amman Marriott, Joseph Khouri, together with slides and video shows. The latest photographs of Petra by Jane Taylor were also exhibited.

JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES CO., LTD. FERTILIZER UNIT INVITATION TO TENDER NO. 39F/92

JPMC announces the invitation to tender No. 39F/92, for the supply of 20,000-25,000 metric tons of wet aluminum hydroxide. The tender documents are available at JPMC offices in Amman, Supply Department. Application for documents should be accompanied by a non-refundable fee of JD(250) for each set of tender documents. The closing date for submission tender is 12:00 hours local time Saturday, October 10, 1992.

Thabet Taher
Managing Director

Jordan Times

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Power of information

THE RESOLUTIONS adopted by Arab information ministers this week, following their three-day meeting in Cairo, are a symptom of the present-day Arab order or lack of it: Weak, fragmented and embarrassed. Of course no one expected more from the ministers. At the same time the honourable gentlemen should not be held accountable or blamed for the Arabs' current state of affairs. We see no escape at the moment from what at least some of the ministers tried to pursue and achieve: Pan-Arab reconciliation. This must be the least that the chiefs of Arab information ministers could endeavour to attain. The ministers and their governments must have had enough of inter-Arab implicit fighting and explicit bashing in the media. An end to media attacks is therefore only a prelude to Arab political reconciliation. As we welcome such move as necessary and basic we would caution against any attempt to gag genuine attempts by intellectuals and writers and ordinary citizens to endeavour and delve into and debate the causes that led to the collapse of the old, pre-Gulf crisis Arab order. Nor should any reconciliation be used as an alibi to crackdown on dissident voices that did not approve of the old order or those who might not be prepared to sanction any new one. Many intellectuals and thinkers believe that it had been attempts like these, to forget and forgive on the spur of the moment, that led the Arabs to their present state of affairs. We must not forget that it was the old order of things that led us to the present harmful and damaging status quo.

One would have expected the ministers, presumably picked from among the foremost intellectuals in their own countries, to earnestly look and candidly debate at least the old information policies of their own states that have contributed to bringing us where we are now. While we realise that it is part of the task of ministers to serve their own governments' interests, we genuinely believe that information ministers are duty-bound by virtue of their own jobs to keep their people accurately informed on political, social, economic and historical issues at all times. This has been correctly called the age of information, not only because of the abundance of material and facts and figures, but because of the power to inform people and make their participation in decision-making all the more effective. Hopefully when next time Arab ministers of information meet they will have this in their minds. For unless they think first of the people they are supposed to serve their resolutions will always be weak and somewhat shy.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Tuesday called on Jordan to boycott the ongoing talks in Washington after Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's statements in the Knesset and Washington's total bias towards the Zionists. It is an insult for all the Arabs to remain committed to the peace talks at a time when they realise that they are being despised by the Americans and their Israeli allies, said the daily. Mr. Rabin and Mr. Bush, intent on humiliating the Arabs, are treating us with contempt and ignoring our rights, the paper continued. Mr. Rabin has announced he wants peace with Syria that would ensure open borders, an exchange of diplomatic missions and normal relations, before he can contemplate the idea of withdrawing Israeli forces from the Golan, said the paper. What the Arabs need to do now, the paper demanded, is to pull out from the peace negotiations, which are leading nowhere, in order to expose the Israelis and their allies and force Mr. Bush to face a dilemma. Mr. Bush, said the paper, wants the negotiations to continue as a ploy to win the coming presidential elections and the Arabs ought to deny the president this dream as long as he is doing nothing to re-establish justice. The paper said, it is enough to see the American attitude vis-a-vis the Iraqi people now under siege and to watch the Iraqi children starting to die to realise the truth about the American and their policies. Pulling out from the negotiations can by no means cause harm to the Arab cause but rather it would save the Arabs from further humiliation, said the paper. The daily said that by announcing our withdrawal we can expose the enemy plots and show the world that it is Israel which must be put under world community pressure in order to comply with the international legitimacy.

SAWT AL SHAAB discussed the Israeli plans to achieve unilateral peace with Syria and said that Mr. Rabin was doing all in his power to achieve that goal and split the Arab parties. The daily said that nothing has been achieved through the sixth round of talks in Washington and, if anything, the Israelis have become more adamant and their policies more extreme than ever before. The paper said that Mr. Rabin wants to have normal commercial and diplomatic relations with Syria without pulling his forces from the occupied Syrian heights; he is unwilling to discuss any withdrawals on the other fronts. What Mr. Rabin hopes to achieve, said the paper, is to take Syria out of the Arab-Israeli conflict, as was done in Egypt in 1979 through the Camp David Agreement. Should Israel succeed in achieving its objectives in this regard, there can be no peace, and the Middle East region would be in for more acts of violence and more explosive situations. Of course Syria is still demanding full Israeli withdrawal on all fronts and this attitude is helping stem Israel's ambitions in this regard, noted the paper. What the Arabs need now, the paper said, is to retain their unity of ranks and maintain their coordination efforts at the negotiating table. It said the coming meeting in Damascus by representatives of the Arab parties should see more unity of ranks in the face of Israel's challenges and continued intransigence.

Economic Forum

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

Argument for and against protection

During the last two years, the Jordanian public opinion has been showered with theories glorifying the merits of the market forces and the miraculous powers of their major instrument: Competition and the price mechanism. That the market forces are the most efficient economic formula is theoretically plausible and empirically tested. But, unfortunately, this theoretical nicety does not apply to all countries at all times. A country has to move gradually until it enters an advanced stage of development in which it qualifies for the market-force tonic.

Now competition is well and readily accepted when it refers to competition among and from domestic enterprises. The danger to the domestic economy arises from foreign competition; opening the domestic market to foreign goods and services can be fatal although some very smart theoretical argumentation may be provided to justify it. It is true that foreign competition serves as a powerful incentive for improving the performance of domestic businesses but only after they succeed in surviving such competition. The annihilation of a domestic project under the cut-throat foreign competition is a benefit that accrues to the world at large but is an outright and perpetual national cost.

Indeed, the application of free international trade theory and the open-door import policy that goes with it can very well inhibit the evolution of healthy domestic manufacturing structures. This is, we believe, the crucial point that free-marketisers tend, innocently enough, to overlook: Foreign competition tends to boost the efficiency of national projects but what if it killed them? What are the safeguards against such a possibility?

Plausibly, the only conceivable safeguard is protection. This is a very resonant word in the vocabulary of free marketisers. To a certain extent, they are right. Domestic enterprises tend to laze behind the high walls of protection. However, a developing country may opt for what can be called a "clean" protection. By this we mean one which is temporary, so that it is reconsidered after a given period of time with the aim of terminating it (if it has

served the purpose or did not work at all) or extending it (if it is still heading in the right direction). A "clean" protection must be accompanied by complete domestic competition: a monopoly is only justified when a single domestic project fares satisfactorily on both price and quality counts.

Dropping the protection option all together can be very hazardous. The Jordanian experience entails an interesting and telling example in this respect. Once upon a time, Jordan had a very prosperous tobacco and cigarette industry which was renowned not only in Jordan but throughout the neighbouring Arab countries. This industry benefited from full protection whereby cigarette imports into Jordan were banned completely. Behind the so-called walls of protection, the Jordanian cigarette industry, consolidated its positions in the domestic market, produced quality cigarettes, sold them at very reasonable prices to the Jordanian consumer and was able to compete in the Arab markets.

In 1983, this protection was practically lifted when ban on cigarette imports was removed. The decline of that prosperous industry started thereafter, simply because Jordanian cigarettes could not, very understandably, compete with world brands that draw on decades, or centuries, of experience and vast R & D facilities. By the time the Jordan dinar was devalued in 1988, the cigarette industry had become too weak to stand the rise in production costs consequent on the increase in the prices of imported inputs. What we have now is a cigarette industry which has been enfeebled by foreign competition and could disappear if the present trend and open-door import policy continue.

Our protection policy should be tailored to our own needs and not determined merely by academic niceties. The policy of no-protection can prove to be the best option more than often, but there may be cases where the contrary holds true. We need the best options all the time.

New charge about old Clinton draft question fires up White House

By Irwin Arief
Reuter

WASHINGTON — A new controversy about an old draft-dodging charge has added fuel to a White House drive to convince voters that Bill Clinton is unfit to be president.

While the political impact of this latest instalment in the Clinton draft saga remains unclear, it serves notice that this dispute is a hardy one indeed and that the Democratic nominee cannot expect to escape it anytime soon.

The new accusation comes from retired army Colonel Eugene Holmes, former Commander of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) at the University of Arkansas, who says in an affidavit "for the record" that Mr. Clinton purposely deceived him 23 years ago in seeking an ROTC slot that helped keep him avoid the Vietnam-era military draft.

"I think that's a letter that every American should read because it goes to the heart of why Bill Clinton should not be president of the United States," said President George Bush's spokesman, Martin Fitzwater, referring to Mr. Holmes's memo.

"He was deceitful and he still cannot tell America the facts about what happened related to his problem with the ROTC and the draft," Mr. Fitzwater said.

Mr. Holmes, in his sworn statement, said Mr. Clinton deceived him by failing to tell him that he actively opposed the Vietnam War and had already received a draft notice when he applied in 1969 for an ROTC slot.

Mr. Clinton "was shrewd enough to realise that had I been aware of his (anti-war) activities, he would not have been accepted into the ROTC programme as a potential officer in the United States Army," Mr. Holmes says in the memo.

His statement does not add any facts or evidence of deception beyond what Mr. Clinton's critics have already alleged.

Rather it is a new judgement of Mr. Clinton's motives and character from a familiar player in the continuing saga of how the Democratic nominee dealt with the Vietnam War and the military draft during the late 1960s.

It was to Mr. Holmes that Mr. Clinton, while a Rhodes scholar in England, wrote a widely publicised December 3, 1969, letter in which he thanked Mr. Holmes for "saving me from the draft."

In that letter, Mr. Clinton openly acknowledged that he had been less than totally frank with Mr. Holmes.

Had Mr. Holmes "known a little more about me, about my political beliefs and activities ... you might have thought me more fit for the draft than for ROTC," Mr. Clinton wrote.

Whether Mr. Holmes' new memo, dated September 7, plays a major role in the campaign is unclear and may depend largely on how Mr. Clinton responds and how voters perceive that response.

But analysts agree Mr. Clinton



Bill Clinton

is vulnerable on the draft question and on the overall character issue, which has dogged his campaign from the start.

His current lead over Mr. Bush is the polls is sizable but not rock-solid as surveys portray voters as skittish and unhappy with both candidates.

While the economy remains voters' top concern and most are unlikely to be swayed by a confusing chain of events that took place so many years ago, campaigns are often won or lost on small shifts in sentiment among tiny groups.

Most important, the Bush campaign has had little luck winning over voters on policy issues and is eager to seize on whatever it can get.

Lagging behind Mr. Clinton by 10 to 15 percentage points with less than seven weeks until election day on November 3, the Bush camp can be expected to pounce on any opportunity to turn voters around.

The Vietnam War was a stormy era in American history when millions of young men of Mr. Clinton's generation had to grapple with the difficult question of the unpopular war, which by 1969 was the focus of massive protest across the country.

Mr. Clinton has been accused of inconsistencies and omissions in his many accounts of how he avoided military service during the war. Some even call him a "draft dodger" simply because he failed to join the military, regardless of the circumstances.

His defenders argue he was only one of many trying to avoid service in that war and should not be held to strict account for lapses in his memory of events so distant.

But the continuing row over Mr. Clinton's draft history seems to underscore that, years after the end of a war that split the nation, the role of those who served and those who didn't can still provoke pain and unease in many citizens.

Muslim Brotherhood gains ground in Egypt

By Ziyad Abu Ghanimeh

AL RA'I daily deserves all the appreciation and gratitude for being the only daily newspaper to carry the news about the Muslim Brotherhood winning most of the seats in the newly elected Egyptian Bar Association.

By publishing this report, Al Ra'i has defied the strict regulations regarding news on the Islamic movement, especially its successes and achievements. Had the result been to the contrary, we would have witnessed media hostile to the Islamic movement filling the world, rejoicing over the movement's failure.

The success achieved by the Islamic movement at the Bar Association in Egypt transcends the trade union level to assume political implications, particularly as it comes after five decades of total domination of the association by other groups.

Nabil Abdul Fattah, a researcher at Al Ahram Political Studies Centre, underlined this important fact in Al Ahram English language weekly noting that the success marked one of the most important political events of this decade in Egypt.

An objective scrutiny of this development in Egypt reveals the following important facts: — The Muslim Brotherhood's success was overwhelming because its members won 80 per cent of the 24-member board seats.

— The fact that Saif al-Islam, son of the late Hassan al-Banna, former leader of the Islamic movement in Egypt, has won the highest number of votes (6895) is an expression of total confidence in the movement. Al Banna helped found the movement in Egypt, like those in the public sector, young lawyers etc.

— By coming to rule the Bar Association, the Muslim Brotherhood lawyers have taken control of the most important union, besides controlling the unions of doctors, pharmacists, engineers, traders, university professors and teachers.

The movement has yet to take control of the Journalists Association in Egypt but that is expected to happen soon.

— The committee supervising the elections at the Bar Association was chaired by a Christian, Foad Jinej, who congratulated the Muslim Brotherhood members on their success. They told him that they would remain true to their commitment of respecting the rights of the Christian Copts of Egypt.

— At the Bar Association elections, the Islamist lawyers joined forces against an alliance of lawyers who were aligned behind the ruling party



Ziyad Abu Ghanimeh

in Egypt. Thus, the success of the 17 lawyers means a victory for the whole Islamic movement in the country.

The election resulted in the total failure of the ruling alliance, with only one of the government supporters winning a seat on the new board.

These facts prompt us to reach the following conclusions: — The landslide victory achieved by the Muslim Brotherhood comes at a time when the Islamic movement in Egypt is facing a campaign of repression on all fronts and at a time when the Egyptian regime refuses to recognise the Muslim Brotherhood's legitimacy.

The victory proves that repressive measures are futile and can by no means succeed in dwarfing the Islamists. The results prove the Muslim Brotherhood has gained ground in all sectors, including the professional unions.

— The Brotherhood's success in controlling the professional unions of Egypt proves that the movement is spreading among the intellectual elite of the Egyptians and among the lower classes. It also proves the failure on the part of the rulers to stifle its progress.

— The success of the Brotherhood brings with it new hope to all Brotherhood supporters and fears to the hearts of the enemies who now witness the countdown towards the emergence of a genuine change in favour of the Islamic movement in Egypt.

The results of the lawyers election in Egypt should serve as a lesson to all those who believe that repression can stifle ideology or eliminate a movement or stop the advance of Islam.

Those who have so far closed their ears to the call of Islam should wake up and listen. They should realise that Islam's victory is close now because it is God's victory.

The writer is a leading member of the Muslim Brotherhood movement. The above article is translated and reprinted from the Jordan Times' Arabic sister daily Al Ra'i.

PLO negotiates by proxy with Israel but has little to show for

By Mona Ziad

TUNIS (AP) — Thousands of kilometres from the Middle East peace talks in Washington, a group of senior PLO figures huddled in a smoke-filled room at the movement's headquarters to negotiate — by proxy — with Israel.

Hours before the talks begin for the day, PLO officials in Tunis swarmed around a bank of four fax machines, sending an endless flow of documents bearing Yasser Arafat's trademark red-ink signature. And hours after the talks have broken up in Washington, the 10-member PLO "follow-up committee" is still in session.

Mr. Arafat, his checkered keffiyeh headscarf set aside, sits with his top lieutenants, including the PLO's foreign minister, Farouk Kaddoumi, and executive committee members like Yasser Abed Rabbo and Mahmoud Abbas.

The PLO officials, most of them chain-smokers, argue, analyse and prepare the next day's positions over endless cups of honey-sweetened tea, Mr. Arafat's favourite drink, or strong black Arabic coffee.

Palestine Liberation Organisation officials believe that 11 months into the U.S.-sponsored peace process, the movement has proved to Israel that the Palestinians doing the talking in Washington speak for PLO.

But even so, Mr. Arafat has little to show for months of effort. This — coupled with growing internal criticism of Mr. Arafat's policies by radicals who oppose the talks and the constant erosion of the PLO's position — means the movement is fighting for survival.

Whether it succeeds will depend to a great extent on whether it can transform itself from a national liberation movement, its military capabilities rapidly atrophying and increasingly irrelevant, to a political powerhouse to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

Probably the most serious problems are those stemming from the PLO's financial troubles and the PLO's isolation because of Mr. Arafat's pro-Iraq stance during the Gulf war.

Saudi Arabia and the oil-rich Gulf states cut off aid to the PLO in August 1990 and expelled tens of thousands of Palestinians, depriving those living in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip of generous remittances.

The PLO is now relying on investments worth an estimated \$2 billion set up years ago.

That has meant a 30 per cent cut in the PLO budget and the flow of cash to the 1.7 million Palestinians in the occupied territories to sustain the faltering uprising they launched against Israel.

four years ago. Palestinian sources say in recent months the Saudis have turned up the heat on the PLO, channelling as much as \$18 million to Mr. Arafat's main rival in the occupied territories, the Muslim fundamentalist Hamas movement.

Iran is also making hefty donations to the fundamentalists, who oppose the Middle East peace talks, PLO officials say. Privately, PLO officials fear the power struggle could lead to civil war in the occupied zones unless Hamas, which is strongest in Gaza, is checked.

Clashes between Hamas and Arafat's Fatah faction, the PLO's main component, were contained last spring. But assassinations are still rampant, some under the guise of eliminating "collaborators."

The truce is fragile and the lack of progress in the Middle East peace talks is certain to intensify frustrations that can only benefit Hamas.

The talks in Washington are focusing on self-rule for the West Bank and Gaza, which the Israelis seized 1967, rather than the Palestinians' demand for an independent homeland in the occupied territories.

That poses another dilemma for the PLO.

Mr. Arafat's charisma and autocratic control of the movement has allowed him to maintain a balance between the Palestinians in the occupied areas, known as "the inside," and the 3.5 million on "the outside" in the diaspora.

But the emergence of local administrative bodies in the West Bank and Gaza, if autonomy comes, would give impetus to new leaders in the occupied zones.

That would shrink the PLO's from a key Mideast player to little more than the manager of refugee affairs.

Since the talks began last October, the PLO has had to drop its demand that the right of return or compensation for the diaspora Palestinians be linked to the debate on interim self-rule.

But its insistence on guarantees that the transitional five-year period of self-rule lead to statehood has kept the negotiations deadlocked.

Right now, Israel and Syria appear close to a breakthrough over the Golan Heights, which the Israelis captured from Syria in 1967.

That would leave the Palestinians isolated in their negotiations with Israel and increase pressure on the PLO to compromise.

But more concessions by the PLO would spark further rifts within the movement and boost Israel's bargaining position.

LETTERS

'Best people on Earth'

To the Editor:

The following letter was originally sent to Jordan National Red Crescent Society, which forwarded it to the Jordan Times for publication.

"The philosophies and teachings that come from the West invade the Arab mind and steal his loyalty, before they rob him of his land and skies." Michel 'Aflaq - July 1943. This is a strange insight: For an Arab to know about a "no fly zone" 49 years before it will happen.

The summer jobs are holding up around my neighbourhood, and so I am sending a check for the cause. I give it for food and medicine to the Iraqi victims of the war.

Our news says our dollar is fast losing its value overseas. When I consider how many hard hours I had to work for these dollars, they should be very valuable indeed. Some of the money I earned from working for an old Jewish person; one who was disappointed by the election of a new, more moderate government in Israel. He is 79 years old, and so I did not tell him his money went to Iraqi refugees. One day I asked him to write a letter to the Israeli government and ask them to deal fairly with the Palestinians. He was very, very upset to learn that I am pro-Arab; and I believe if I had told him that I am pro-Iraqi he would have had a heart attack.

Speaking of medical conditions, your King was over here in the Mayo Clinic. My wife and I mailed him a humorous "Snoopy" get well card. I told him, in the card, that he, and all the people of Jordan, are truly the best people on Earth. He must have received thousands of cards from presidents, kings, prime ministers, and senators — but I believe he liked ours the most. It's probably his only "Snoopy" card.

Ronald J. Allard,
213 Pottswatomi Drive,
Elkhart, Indiana 46516,
USA.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Financial Markets

in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

Currency	NEW YORK 22/9/92	TOKYO 22/9/92
Sterling Pound	1.7080	1.7183
Deutsche Mark	1.4835	1.4849
Swiss Franc	1.3022	1.3048
French Franc	5.0860	5.0840**
Japanese Yen	123.70	122.67
European Currency Unit	1.3805	1.3859**

USD Per STG
European Opening 4:30 p.m. GMT

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.18	5.12	5.18	5.31
Sterling Pound	9.50	9.25	8.75	8.37
Deutsche Mark	8.75	8.81	8.81	8.82
Swiss Franc	6.93	7.00	7.00	6.93
French Franc	10.50	10.62	9.37	9.50
Japanese Yen	4.37	4.00	3.87	3.75
European Currency Unit	12.25	11.00	10.38	10.00

Currency	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	347.25	6.65	Silver	5.80

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.679	0.681
Sterling Pound	1.1584	1.1642
Deutsche Mark	0.4574	0.4597
Swiss Franc	0.5207	0.5235
French Franc	0.1335	0.1342
Japanese Yen	0.5533	0.5541
Dutch Guilder	0.4067	0.4181
Swedish Krona	0.1222	0.1228
Italian Lira	0.0542	0.0545
Belgian Franc	0.02214	0.02225

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	1.7720	1.7840
Lebanese Lira	0.02950	0.02775
Saudi Riyal	0.1808	0.1820
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2250	2.2200
Qatari Riyal	0.1840	0.1850
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2100
Omani Rial	1.7310	1.7430
UAE Dirham	0.1840	0.1850
Greek Drachma	0.3755	0.3955
Cypriot Pound	1.520	1.550

Index	20/9/92	Close	21/9/92	Close
All-Share	146.45		147.61	
Banking Sector	108.47		110.65	
Insurance Sector	152.14		152.23	
Industry Sector	195.89		196.21	
Services Sector	212.71		209.39	

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Jordan's financial bodies jogging for fitness

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Everything seems quiet on Jordan's banking front but, in the backyard auditors, bankers, investors and monetary officials are busy facilitating the Kingdom's financial industry.

During 1991, five events changed the banking image of Jordan. They were: The closure of the Syrian Jordan Bank, the National Islamic Bank and the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), the purchase by the Business Bank of BCCI branches in Jordan and, as a result, becoming a fully-fledged commercial bank and the Arab Finance Corporation (Jordan) obtaining an investment bank licence and changing its name to the Union Bank for Savings and Investment.

A series of changes reshaped the country's banking system in recent years but, it seems, the process is still long and will not be totally completed in the foreseeable future.

"During the coming weeks, the focus is to complete the merger, sale and capital restructuring of a number of financial companies and banks," Nasser Lozi told the Jordan Times without providing details except for two parties.

Mr. Lozi, a board member and designate general manager of Jordan Finance House (JFH), said



Nasser Lozi

that, within the declared policy of the central bank to raise the capital and reduce the number of banks, more mergers (and sales) would be taking place among financial institutions for many years to come.

Mr. Lozi revealed that a committee of many official and private specialists was conducting an intense and thorough examination of the records and financial accounts of both JFH and Darco for Housing and Investment Co. as a first step towards merging both institutions.

Having obtained an approval from the central bank to start a merger process late last year between JFH and Darco, a tremendous volume of technical and administrative procedures have been going on since April and will, Mr. Lozi expects, be finalised in a comprehensive report this month.

According to Mr. Lozi, further deliberations and discussions will be held at the board and general assembly levels of both JFH and Darco to clear the road for the merger and the emergence of a new entity.

The new entity, he elaborated, would then apply for an investment bank licence from the central bank which usually requires a capital between JD 4 million to

JD 10 million to issue such a licence.

JFH is a public shareholding company whose capital stands at JD 6 million, a large portion of which is held by prominent Jordanian businessmen. Darco is also a public shareholding company whose capital stands at JD 2 million, over 60 per cent of which is a Housing Bank equity.

"Both Darco and JFH managed to escape large losses experienced by other financial companies due to sharp competition in the market and the negative economic climate which followed the deep recession in the country in the second half of the 80s," Mr. Lozi pointed out.

He said Darco was not actively and heavily involved in carrying out real estate projects and, as such, succeeded in maintaining its capital base without erosion.

Mr. Lozi said the central bank had preferred to merge JFH, Darco and REFCO (Real Estate Financing Corporation) in mid 1991 but JFH board of directors did not favour such a link.

"Darco's financial base and its ownership structure were seen as more adequate and favourable and the decision to partner with Darco was eventually agreed late last year," he explained.

According to Mr. Lozi, JFH operations zigzagged since it was set up in July 1981 having functioned first in Islamic principles and, after a few years, returning to prevailing commercial practices.

Faced with tough market competition and a recession which shadowed the region's economic climate in 1985-1987, JFH opened talks with Beirut's Al Mashrek Bank on Jan. 1, 1988 to merge with (or buy) Al Mashrek's Jordan branches.

The negotiations, authorised by the Central Bank of Jordan, had barely started when, on Jan. 8, Al Mashrek Bank collapsed.

A period of indecisiveness prevailed, according to Mr. Lozi, and was prolonged by the Gulf crisis. The end result of the overall instability was more pressure on JFH to work faster towards

the merger solution previously mentioned.

Mr. Lozi expected the share value of the entity to be born early next year to trade at about JD 1,500 since the JFH share closed at about JD 1,470 when trading was suspended in late 1987.

Pointing to JFH results at the end of June this year, he said the company was able to record net profit of JD 470,345 compared to JD 226,454 posted on June 30, 1991 from various operations, including brokering share trading at the Amman Financial Market.

JFH had JD 7.8 million in deposits and JD 2.5 in cash collateral at the end of June 1992 while maintaining JD 8.7 million in cash at hand and in banks and JD 10.8 million in various credit facilities. The investment portfolio amounted to JD 0.7 million.

Jordan Gulf Bank, which only recently absorbed the Syrian Jordanian Bank, is also undergoing "cosmetic" changes.

According to informed market sources, negotiations are still going on to merge Jordan Gulf Bank with the Jordan branches of Al Mashrek Bank-both banks currently being run by two appointed administrative boards.

The new entity resulting from the merger will be sold to a group of investors who are interested to set up a new bank, capitalised at JD 10 million, and employing 400 persons being the staff of two

merging banks.

Four parties are now seeking to purchase the bank but, according to a knowledgeable source, only one group has emerged as being serious and most likely to takeover the two banks yet to merge. The group was reportedly led by Tharwat Al Barghouti and other financially strong Jordanian investors.

Another financial institution that is currently restructuring its capital is REFCO.

Monetary sources told the Jordan Times, on condition of anonymity, that REFCO had taken the brunt of recession and the effects of the Gulf crisis, having lost millions of dinars as a result.

Having had to service small amounts for about 100,000 clients at 16 branches, REFCO's costs outstripped earnings and had debts exacerbated the company's financial woes, the sources said.

They believe that REFCO's low JD 200,000 capital, the majority control of the public shareholding company by the Mango family, and the high JD 67 market value of the share have all been main factors that stood against various mergers REFCO had sought for quite some time.

As such, REFCO is reported to be restructuring its capital to be JD 4 million in anticipation of obtaining an investment bank licence and a central bank cash injection.

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
JORDAN TRADING BANK	36,410	3.000	3.110	3.130
JORDAN SECURITIES BANK	24,348	3.350	3.310	3.250
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	806,864	2.400	2.500	2.490
JORDAN FINANCIAL BANK	137	2.420	2.440	2.440
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	875,750	1.330	1.300	1.300
UNION BANK FOR SAVINGS & INVESTMENT	5,734	2.500	2.530	2.530
JORDAN BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	81,223	3.660	3.790	3.750
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	675,679	1.990	2.050	2.040
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/TRADE	400,040	1.000	1.110	1.130
JORDAN TRADING COMPANY	144,642	2.140	2.120	2.120
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO INVESTMENTS	23,478	3.300	3.310	3.280
JORDAN BANK	169,813	3.350	3.470	3.470
WEST BANK SAVINGS/INVESTMENT FOR WORKING	695	4.610	4.610	4.510
QATAR JORDAN BANK	183	18.100	18.100	18.100
BANK OF JORDAN	4,540	14.070	16.500	16.470
JORDAN BANK	46,400	156.000	155.000	155.000
JORDAN FINANCIAL SERVICES	21,130	3.480	3.880	3.900
JORDAN SECURITIES BANK	2,720	1.880	1.880	1.840
JORDAN LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	71,240	3.230	3.240	3.240
JORDAN UNION INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE	202	3.900	3.900	3.900
JORDAN SOCIAL & TRADING	5,640	3.150	3.150	3.150
JORDANIAN ECONOMIC POWER	5,383	3.300	3.330	3.340
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	139,271	5.840	5.900	5.900
JORDANIAN POLICE	21,098	3.210	3.170	3.190
JORDAN TRADING & INVESTMENT	17,000	0.770	0.660	0.660
JORDAN MEDICAL & COMMERCIAL HOTELS	86,767	2.440	2.430	2.380
JORDAN MEDICAL CORPORATION	1,544	0.260	0.270	0.270
JORDANIAN HOTEL & TOURISM	3,784	1.130	1.130	1.130
JORDANIAN HOTEL & TOURISM	11,108	1.230	1.250	1.250
JORDAN GULF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	21,367	0.820	0.820	0.830
JORDAN INVESTMENT CO. FOR MGMT. & FOOD PROD.	6,314	1.130	1.200	1.180
JORDAN PAPER CONVERSION & TRADING	5,132	1.480	1.470	1.450
JORDAN ALUMINIUM INDUSTRIES	41,778	7.600	7.830	7.850
JORDAN PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	10,473	6.000	6.850	6.850
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	18,113	21.500	21.500	21.500
JORDANIAN STEEL INDUSTRIES	76,770	5.690	5.720	5.690
JORDAN AL DANA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	153,821	4.100	4.000	4.000
JORDANIAN FIBRE-CERAMICAL INDUSTRIES	48,352	3.170	3.570	3.570
JORDAN WAREHOUSE WELLS	233,558	10.500	11.000	11.000
JORDAN GLASS INDUSTRIES	26,703	6.650	6.500	6.500
JORDAN GLASS INDUSTRIES	730	0.720	0.730	0.730
JORDAN PAPER & CARD BOARD FACTORIES	11,350	4.950	5.000	5.000
JORDAN FIBRE MANUFACTURING	27,233	2.800	2.900	2.900
JORDAN CEMENT FOR BUILDING & CHEMICALS	58,406	3.330	3.320	3.210
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	23,316	0.750	0.740	0.740
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	46,055	4.700	4.700	4.710
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	6,990	12.500	12.550	12.550
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	19,485	1.500	1.500	1.500
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	4,940	1.500	1.500	1.500
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	4,440	1.100	1.110	1.110
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	5,900	3.900	3.950	3.950
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	5,533	6.000	6.150	6.150
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	82,138	3.780	3.780	3.820
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	25,083	1.190	1.190	1.190
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	5,480	1.530	1.530	1.600
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	6,970	0.440	0.440	0.430
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	81,421	4.780	4.770	4.780
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	146,317	3.500	3.500	3.490
JORDANIAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	2,337	6.400	6.400	6.390

Britain cuts interest rates

LONDON (R) — Britain cut interest rates to boost its moribund economy Tuesday, taking quick advantage of a new flexibility after pulling sterling out of the European exchange rate mechanism (ERM).

The Bank of England cut rates by one percentage point to nine per cent, triggering hope of moderate recovery after the longest recession for 60 years.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Norman Lamont said the lower rates did not mean the government was easing up on its fight against inflation, the central pillar for the last four years and the main justification for ERM membership.

"I am not going to take any risk (with inflation). If at any time I thought it was going to pose a problem again I would not hesitate to put rates up," Mr. Lamont said.

"There are some people who believe being outside the ERM is a free lunch. I must tell them frankly they are wrong," he said in a television interview.

The cut, taking rates to their lowest since June 1988, will take some of the heat off Prime Minister John Major when he faces a tough battle in an emergency parliamentary debate on the economy Thursday and as he tries to heal bitter divisions in his Conservative Party over European policy.

The scale of the problems facing Mr. Major's government was underlined by news of a larger than expected August trade deficit. With import volumes at record levels, they should normally be depressed in a recession.

The trade gap widened to £1.19 billion (\$2.04 billion) from £1.13 billion (\$1.94 billion) in July.

"I can soon see a return to the

had old days with the current account deficit burgeoning out to a very high level and causing sterling some problems," said Nigel Richardson, an economist at S.G. Warburg.

The trade gap evoked memories of the last time Britain was without a strict monetary or exchange rate policy from 1985 to 1987 when, fuelled by a consumer boom, monthly current account deficits reached about £2 billion (\$3.4 billion).

It was in response to that, and ballooning inflation, that interest rates were raised to 15 per cent and the pound was unofficially made to shadow the mark in a move which turned into full ERM membership in October 1990.

The new nine per cent interest rate is below Germany's key rate of 9.5 per cent.

Economists said this indicated the government was not considering an imminent return to the ERM after suspending membership at the height of last week's sterling crisis.

Mr. Lamont made clear that after bringing inflation down to 3.6 per cent from 10.9 per cent in the last two years the government did not intend to ease its grip on prices.

He said he was aiming for "a level of inflation which is equal or better than amongst the best of our major competitors." He made no mention of the government's previous commitment to aim for zero inflation.

"I'm not going to take any risks," Mr. Lamont said.

The stock market responded well to the rate cut with the FTSE index of 100 leading shares adding more than 40 points to its heavy gains of the last three days to approach 2,600.

Swiss jobless rate rises to level 1939

BERN (AP) — Swiss joblessness reached 3.1 per cent last month, the first time the rate was exceeded since the end of the Great Depression of the 1930s, officials have said.

The Federal Office for Industry, Trade and Labor said 94,851 people were out of work at the end of August, an increase of 0.2 per cent over the 2.9 per cent jobless the previous month, the last time Switzerland had 3.1 per cent unemployed was in March 1939, when 61,100 people were out of work.

Jean-Luc Nordmann, director of the office, said he didn't expect joblessness to decline before next summer because of global economic problems.

The Swiss unemployment rate, which was 0.8 per cent in 1990, has been climbing slowly during the worldwide economic recession. At the end of last year it was 1.9 per cent.

The inflation rate, however, has been improving in recent months. The Federal Office for Statistics said that the August rate was 3.6 per cent, down from 3.8 per cent the previous month.

Last year Swiss inflation hit an annual rate of 5.9 per cent, a 10-year high. The rate hovered near zero in the mid-1980s.

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ANUNT AL AMBASADEI ROMANE

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Shelling around airport puts Bosnian air relief at risk

SARAJEVO (R) — Serb gun batteries pounded Muslim and Croat suburbs around Sarajevo Airport Tuesday as countries providing relief for the besieged city had apparent second thoughts about the safety of resuming aid flights.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees delayed plans to send the first flight with relief supplies since Sept. 3, the day an Italian aid plane was shot down.

U.N. officials said a plane would be sent from Zagreb but only to pick up Brigadier General Philippe Morillon, the deputy commander of U.N. peacekeeping forces who has been visiting Sarajevo.

Sarajevo Radio said Serb forces shelled the Muslim suburb of Dohrinja and the mainly Croat quarter of Stup, both close to the airport, during the night.

The fighting continued despite an agreement between all three warring sides in the Bosnian conflict not to hamper the air bridge, the resumption of which is becoming urgent as winter approaches.

The area around the airport has remained a battle zone where the lumbering transport planes of 19 air forces participating in the relief effort would be vulnerable.

The city, where 380,000 people have been trapped during a five-month siege by rebel Serbs, was completely without electricity after fighting damaged power lines Monday.

The Muslim-controlled radio said Serbs hit the old town with mortars Monday evening in an attack that lasted until midnight and wounded three people.

Fighting around Sarajevo, under siege since April by Serb forces opposed to Bosnian independence, has stopped daily convoys from passing along the land corridor since before the weekend.

In an incident which boded ill for land convoys, Serb women and children blocked distribution of U.N. aid sent out from Sarajevo at the weekend to the mainly-Muslim residents of Srebrenica in eastern Bosnia.

The convoy had to return to



Bosnian soldiers prepare to shell Serb positions

Sarajevo after being blocked by the women and children, apparently from Serb families evicted from Srebrenica.

In New York, Alija Izetbegovic, Bosnia's Muslim president, urged the U.N. General Assembly to either help his country or lift the arms embargo against it.

"The present arms embargo ties our hands at a time when our country is being strangled," he said. "The international community cannot simultaneously sidestep its commitment to defend us and nullify our means of defence."

A meeting between Yugoslav Prime Minister Milan Panic and foreign ministers of the U.N. Security Council's five permanent members failed to delay plans to vote on Yugoslavia's expulsion from the General Assembly Tuesday.

Mr. Panic won praise for his efforts to halt the war but Western spokesmen were distrustful of the nationalist politicians in Serbia, including President Slobodan Milosevic, whom they blame for the conflict.

Acting U.S. Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, a former ambassador to Yugoslavia, said of Mr. Panic: "In our view, he is working very hard and as constructively as he can to bring peace to Yugoslavia."

But he stressed, in an apparent allusion to Mr. Milosevic, that "there are various players in the game (in Yugoslavia)."

Belgrade opposition leaders who support Mr. Panic are angered by the West's determination to expel Yugoslavia from the General Assembly.

They claim the move undermines him in his developing power struggle with Mr. Milosevic, a former Communist who controls the ruling Socialist Party and is adept at fanning the nationalism of Serbs already angered by U.N. sanctions.

At international peace talks in Geneva, the Bosnian government proposed a constitutional framework that would maintain Bosnia as a single state but decentralise power to Serb and Croat regions.

The plan was rejected by Serbs, who have seized 70 per cent of Bosnia since April after weapons supplied by Yugoslavia and proclaimed a Bosnian Serb republic.

Dr. Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, said: "We cannot accept such a concept." The two international mediators leading efforts to bring peace to former Yugoslavia left Geneva Tuesday for Athens for talks expected to include Greek objections to recognising the independence to Macedonia.

A United Nations spokesman said the two, Lord Owen for the European Community (EC) and Cyrus Vance for the U.N., would meet Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis later in the day and have a working dinner with him.

Spokesman Fred Eckhardt said there would be a "general review of the situation in Yugoslavia" although he expected the Macedonian issue to come up. In Athens, government spokesman Vassilis Maginas said the main focus would be on the war in Bosnia.

Bush offers U.S. support for expanded U.N. peacekeeping role

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — President George Bush offered Monday to support an expanded peacekeeping role for the United Nations to meet challenges to peace in the post-cold war era.

The blue beret has become a symbol of hope, Mr. Bush said in an address to the special session of the U.N. General Assembly, referring to the blue-hatted U.N. soldiers sent to monitor trouble spots around the world.

Mr. Bush also endorsed indefinite extension of an international agreement designed to block the spread of nuclear weapons.

However, Mr. Bush did not directly promise to provide U.S. troops for peacekeeping operations. "Member states must always retain the final decision on use of their troops," Mr. Bush told an assemblage of world leaders that listened quietly to his address.

Still, he acknowledged that "robust peacekeeping requires men and equipment that only member states can provide." The president added: "These forces must be available on short notice on the request of the Security Council with the approval, of course, of the governments providing them."

Mr. Bush urged them not "to build walls against anything new."

To turn inward and retreat from the world is to invite disaster and defeat," Mr. Bush said in what will be his last address to the world body unless he wins reelection.

He was applauded only at the end. Asked about Mr. Bush's speech, British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd told reporters: "It was full of interesting ideas... especially on the peacekeeping side."

"We have to study it," said Chinese Ambassador Li Daoyi, being more circumspect. "A very positive speech," said Marrack Goulding, the U.N. undersecretary-general in charge of peacekeeping.

In general terms, Mr. Bush supported the "agenda for peace" advanced by Secretary-General Boutros Ghali to cope with spreading violence around the world.

The president said he had directed Defence Secretary Dick Cheney to develop programmes for using U.S. bases, engineers and intelligence jointly with other nations under the control of the United Nations and such regional groups as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

But he did not endorse Dr. Ghali's proposal for a \$50 million peacekeeping start-up fund as well as a \$1 billion peacekeeping endowment fund.

Mr. Bush called for a special meeting of the Security Council to assess the idea.

A senior U.S. official said no

change is planned in making up arrears of more than \$200 million. Overall, the United States owes between \$600 million and \$1.1 billion to the United Nations, depending on the accounting system used.

"The fear of nuclear armageddon between the superpowers has vanished," Mr. Bush said. And now, he said, there is an opportunity "to forge a genuine global community."

"Securing democracy and securing the peace in the century ahead will be no simple task," Mr. Bush said.

"We see this U.N. session as a chance to push for a more effective U.N.," a Bush aide said in advance of the president's speech. He cited Iraq, Yugoslavia and Somalia as examples of problem areas that need more attention.

The United Nations has taken the lead in locating and destroying weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and engaged in efforts to curb ethnic conflicts in shattered Yugoslavia. Recently, it has begun to play a modest role in trying to end the fighting that has contributed to the deaths of more than 100,000 people in Somalia.

Some 40,000 blue-helmeted troops are serving in peacekeeping operations in Central America, Africa, the Balkans and Cambodia. This is straining the U.N. budget. Outstanding dues now total about \$1.8 billion.

Abulfaz Elchibey would be possible if it could be well-prepared. A good prerequisite for the meeting would be a ceasefire in Karabakh," he said. The mountainous enclave is populated by Armenians, but their independence declaration has failed to impress Azeri authorities claiming jurisdiction.

Several mediation efforts and ceasefire deals have failed to quell the fighting.

The Azeri news agency, Turan, said fierce battles were continuing Monday in several areas for a third consecutive day. "Despite heavy casualties, it seems nobody is going to yield," it said.

Azerbaijan's military high command has given Armenian fighters in the enclave until Tuesday to surrender or face the consequences.

Nagorno-Karabakh self-defence forces claimed they killed 90 Azerbaijanis who advanced on the Marum district of the territory. Azerbaijan denied the figure, saying no more than 10 were killed.

The territory's press centre said Azerbaijanis jets straddled Stepanakert for a second day, killing four people. It claimed the region's air defences downed one of the fighters.

Nagorno-Karabakh officials said Azerbaijan forces shelled Armenia's border district of Goris, killing six Armenian villagers.

In the Central Asian republic of Tajikistan, shots rang out in the capital Dushanbe, where streets were deserted because of

renewed fighting, the ITAR-TASS News Agency reported.

Acting President Akbar Iskandarov said his government would forcibly stop the fighting between warring factions if they didn't cease fire by Thursday, ITAR-TASS said.

"If they fail to do so, they will be declared traitors to the nation. Force will be used against them — they will be forcibly disarmed and brought to justice," TASS quoted him as saying in an appeal to the nation.

Hundreds of people have died in months of clashes between supporters and opponents of former President Rakhmon Nabiyev, who resigned two weeks ago after being surrounded by armed opposition members at the capital Dushanbe airport.

Tajik Radio said Monday that a number of people were killed in fighting this week around the southern Kargan-Tyube region, near the border with Afghanistan.

"Several people were killed from the opposing sides as a result of the clashes," the radio, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation, said.

Russian Television said about 300 people picketed the country's parliament Monday, demanding more effective measures to halt the bloodshed.

In Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze, the former Soviet foreign minister who returned to his native Georgia this year as leader, said Monday he would quit the job if violence blocks national elections set for October.

COLUMN 8

Spanish townsfolk up in arms... over Napoleon

PARIS (R) — A group of Spaniards who claim their forefathers were badly treated by Napoleon have called on France to dump the emperor's ashes into a remote sea and demolish the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. In a letter to President Francois Mitterrand, hundreds of residents of the northeastern town of Rosas said Napoleon should be declared one of history's "big losers" for the sake of truth. They want the French people to repudiate the post-revolutionary emperor in a public ceremony that should be televised worldwide before the opening of the European Community single market next January.

"We do not believe that a truly brotherly Europe can be built without first correcting manipulations of history... that hurt the honour and dignity of our forefathers," said residents of the town on the Catalan coast of Spain. They said they were acting on behalf of forefathers who fought Napoleon in the 19th century Spanish War of Independence. Demands, written in the Catalan language, included replacing — at the expense of French taxpayers — the Arc de Triomphe, Napoleon's victory arch, with a monument denouncing human vanity and re-writing all French history textbooks.

They want all French streets celebrating the emperor's battles renamed, and all objects named after the emperor, including Napoleon brandy and gold coins, destroyed or renamed. The ashes of Napoleon, who conquered most of Europe before being defeated at Waterloo in 1815, are kept in Paris at the Invalides, a former hospital for his soldiers.

Gorbachev's car stolen in Moscow

MOSCOW (R) — Thieves have stolen one of former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's new cars. The car, one of three bought for the Gorbachev Foundation think-tank to replace the former Kremlin chief's confiscated official limousine, was taken from a guarded parking lot late Sunday, ITAR-TASS News Agency said Monday. The limousine was part of Mr. Gorbachev's retirement settlement after the collapse of the Soviet Union last December, but was taken away by Russian President Boris Yeltsin after Mr. Gorbachev criticised his economic reforms.

Greenpeace hangs anti-pollution banner from Eiffel Tower

PARIS (AP) — Five Greenpeace activists scaled the Eiffel Tower Monday to hang a banner denouncing the pollution of the world's oceans. The protesters sought to call attention to marine pollution on the eve of a meeting in Paris of 13 countries with Atlantic Ocean coastlines. In a statement, Greenpeace called for the 13 countries to adopt a resolution banning ocean dumping of toxic substances such as nuclear waste. The environmental group has denounced French and British positions which, it claims, would leave the door open to banned dumping in 10 years. The banner read, "no legal pollution of the seas."

David gets new glass shield

FLORENCE, Italy (R) — A glass shield was placed around the base of Michelangelo's statue of David, which was damaged when a man attacked it with a hammer a year ago. The shield does not cover the renaissance statue itself but prevents viewers from getting close enough to touch the masterpiece in the Accademia Gallery, museum officials said. In September 1991, an unemployed Italian man who claimed a muse had ordered him to attack the statue, struck it with a hammer and knocked off one of the toes of the left foot. The four-metre (13-foot) statue was restored using chips of the toe found on the floor after the attack.

New London trains are too big for stations

LONDON (R) — London's underground train network will have to cut back platforms at 16 of its stations because the new trains ordered don't fit. The platforms at central London stations will need to be narrowed at a cost of \$40,000 (\$68,700) to accommodate the new generation of trains, a spokeswoman said Monday. "We realised that on some of the tighter corners we were going to have to shave back the platform," the spokeswoman said. "Only 10 mm (0.4 inch) needs to be taken off but we're cutting back 25 mm (1.0 inch) to make sure."

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

China to hold party congress on Oct. 12

PEKING (R) — The ruling politburo of China's Communist Party has set Oct. 12 as the starting date for the 14th party congress, which will determine policy for the next five years, Xinhua News Agency said. "The political bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) has proposed that the 14th CPC national congress be held on Oct. 12 in Peking," the official news agency said. The last congress was held in 1987. Analysts say the congress is expected to endorse Deng Xiaoping's dramatic economic reforms and let the 88-year-old paramount leader establish his political legacy.

Court orders Gorbachev to testify

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia's constitutional court Monday ordered former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to testify in a trial that will determine whether the Communist Party he led was lawfully disbanded. The court could fine Mr. Gorbachev 100 rubles — less than 50 cents — if he refuses to testify, said Boris Strashun, an aide to the chairman of the court. Mr. Gorbachev was on a private visit to Germany and was unavailable for comment, but he previously has said he would not testify. "I would not say anything even if I am led there in handcuffs," he said in August. "This is just a farce. They are trying to use the constitutional court, which I deeply respect... But they are trying to turn it into a political show trial as a minimum, and if possible, as a trial of history. This is not what this court must be doing." The panel of 13 judges on the constitutional court are weighing the legality of Russian President Boris Yeltsin's ban on the Soviet Union's former ruling party.

Woerner wins new term as NATO chief

BRUSSELS (R) — NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner will stay in the job longer than planned because member nations say they need his experience to guide the alliance through one of its worst crises. Norway said Monday all 16 North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) members had agreed to keep him in the job, probably until mid-1996. Mr. Woerner, a former West German defence minister and trained fighter pilot, had been due to quit next year. A NATO spokesman declined all comment, but diplomats said the forceful and decisive Woerner — who saw the alliance through the end of the cold war after taking the job in 1988 — was needed to help resolve problems over its new role. "It is now clear that Woerner will continue and Norway supports this consensus," Norwegian Defence Minister Johan Joergens Holst told Reuters in Oslo. Mr. Holst himself had been a candidate to replace Mr. Woerner, who will be 58 Thursday and underwent major intestinal surgery earlier this year.

13 killed in S. African violence

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Thirteen blacks were shot or burned to death in townships around South Africa in political violence overnight, police said Tuesday. In the worst incident, gunmen in a minibus parked on a highway outside Johannesburg fired on a passing taxi, killing five people and seriously wounding five others, including a two-year-old girl. Also around Johannesburg, a black man was shot dead in Sebokeng, another was burned to death in Alexandra and a woman died when gunmen with AK-47 assault rifles attacked a taxi in Soweto. In Umzinyathi, a squatter camp north of Durban, three people were shot dead and two people were killed when gunmen fired at buses in Khayelitsha in the western Cape. In the past eight years more than 13,000 blacks have been killed in township fighting, much of it between Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) and the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party.

Manila legalises Communist Party

MANILA (R) — The Philippines Tuesday legalised the Communist Party, which had been outlawed for 35 years, and urged leftist rebels to lay down their arms and make peace with the government. President Fidel Ramos approved a law repealing the 1957 anti-subversion act declaring the party an illegal organisation and prohibiting membership in it. The lifting of the anti-Communist ban has been described by officials as a major government step towards ending South East Asia's longest-running Marxist insurgency.

U.S. experts complete MIA search in Vietnam

HANOI (R) — U.S. experts who have scoured Vietnam since August have found some information about American servicemen missing from the Vietnam war, an official Hanoi newspaper said Tuesday.

U.S. teams finished a month-long joint search with Vietnamese officials in nine central and southern provinces on Sept. 18, the Vietnam News Daily said. The newspaper gave no details about the information they found, but Vietnamese officials said earlier that all evidence recovered from plane crash sites or produced by interviews with villagers either proved or indicated that the servicemen died in the war.

The head of a U.S. office in Hanoi in charge of the search efforts, Lieutenant Colonel Jack Donovan, said earlier that the

experts had found some remains, but that it was too early to say whether they were American.

Top Nixon-era officials said Monday they had concluded U.S. prisoners of war were left behind when the United States pulled its soldiers out of Vietnam in 1973.

"As of now, I can come to no other conclusion," James Schlesinger, director of Central Intelligence Agency from February to July 1973, told the U.S. Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA affairs.

"I have a high-probability assessment that people were left behind in Laos," he said, "and a medium probability assessment with regard to Vietnam."

Unanswered questions about those missing in action (MIAs) and POWs remain the chief obstacle to normalising U.S.-Vietnamese relations.

IAEA concerned over safety, plutonium

VIENNA (AP) — The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has called for a world-wide convention to address growing concerns over the safety of nuclear power.

Conferees from several nations expressed fears that increasing stocks of the nuclear fuel plutonium pose an international danger, especially as a ton of plutonium is about to be shipped from France to Japan.

However, a formal discussion on the plutonium issue was taken off the agenda of the weeklong conference at the insistence of the United States and some other countries, according to IAEA sources who requested anonymity.

IAEA Director General Hans Blix told reporters Friday that unidentified member countries were not ready for a comprehensive review of the plutonium issue at the meeting, which began Monday.

But the plutonium question was addressed by several delegates and French delegation chief Philippe Rouvillois called it "a delicate problem."

U.S. chief delegate Ivan Selin, head of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, called for "an international nuclear safety convention to assure minimum levels of safety in all plants, wherever they may be."

Bush goes after Clinton on draft issue

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush's attempts to chip away at Democratic rival Bill Clinton's lead in the polls by focusing on the draft issue appeared to have little effect in the latest preference survey.

On Monday Mr. Bush called Mr. Clinton's changing versions on how he avoided the draft a matter of a seriously flawed character. Mr. Clinton called it a question of family memory.

But Americans appear to give the issue little importance, according to the latest polls, when confronted with the enormity of the nation's economic problems.

The latest ABC News/Washington Post poll released Monday has Mr. Clinton with a 21 percentage point lead over Mr. Bush in the run-up to the Nov. 3 presidential election.

Mr. Bush went to New York to speak to the United Nations General Assembly before going for Mr. Clinton's throat over the draft issue on a popular radio talk show.

"There are still wolves in the woods and someday the commander-in-chief might have to make a very difficult decision," Mr. Bush told the radio audience.

"The fundamental difficulty is that he (Mr. Clinton) has not told the full truth, the whole truth, nothing but the truth," Mr. Bush said of the Democrat on the Rush Limbaugh Show.

Mr. Clinton, in Chicago to collect the endorsement of a group of 400 corporate chief executives, responded by noting he was endorsed Saturday by retired Admiral William Crowe, who was chairman of the military Joint Chiefs of Staff under Mr. Bush

and his predecessor, President Ronald Reagan.

"Admiral Crowe has more credibility on truth-telling than George Bush," Mr. Clinton said.

Pressed on the point, Democratic presidential candidate added, "The only reaction is to go back to what Mr. Bush said on this issue when he was ahead in the polls (back in February). He said it shouldn't be an issue."

Later, Mr. Clinton cited the passage of time for his problem.

"After 23 years you forget some things, and that happened to me, and I'm sorry that happened. But the basic facts are still clear," Mr. Clinton said in one television interview.

Mr. Bush, a World War II navy combat pilot, whose plane was shot down over the Pacific Ocean, until now had only discussed his rival's military record in passing — leaving most direct attacks to subordinates, including Vice President Dan Quayle, who avoided combat duty in Vietnam by using family ties to get into the Indiana National Guard.

With just six weeks before election day, Mr. Bush has widened his substantial lead over President Bush, leading 58 per cent to 37 per cent among likely voters, the ABC News/Washington Post poll found.

Mr. Clinton gained four points from last week as Mr. Bush slipped two.

The Sept. 16-20 poll of 637 likely voters nationwide has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

A new USA Today-CNN-Gallup Poll found that 52 per cent of voters thought Mr. Clinton could handle the economy better than

Mr. Bush, while 36 per cent said Mr. Bush could handle it better.

Mr. Bush acknowledged his problem on the call-in show. "I think we're poised for a dramatic recovery, but I think people are scared. I think they have a job and are not sure they'll have that job tomorrow."

Meanwhile, a woman was charged Monday with attempting to kill and threatening to kill President George Bush last Tuesday when he was campaigning in Denver.

No shots were fired by the 33-year-old woman while she watched the presidential motorcade in an office park in the suburbs of Denver, according to the complaint filed in U.S. District Court here.

The woman, Deborah Butler, said she wanted to shoot Mr. Bush because she was having problems with her life and wanted attention. Mrs. Butler, who is married and is a suburban resident of this western American city, has been staying at a psychiatric hospital.

In a separate development, fictional U.S. television character Murphy Brown, criticised by real-life U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle for having a child out of wedlock, struck back Monday, asking whether Mr. Quayle was living on another planet.

In a bizarre mixture of fact and fantasy, Mr. Quayle comes in for a series of verbal attacks in a special season opener of the television programme, which uses actual quotes from the vice president and news reports on the dispute.

Mr. Quayle made some of the biggest headlines of his vice-pres-

idency in May when he attacked the fictional television reporter for having a child out of wedlock. He said the story line glorified illegitimacy and mocked the role of fathers.

The special broadcast showed Murphy bringing home the baby born at the end of the last season, as well as a thousand pounds of potatoes dumped on Mr. Quayle's front door. Mr. Quayle has been repeatedly reminded of his real-life mistake in a New Jersey schoolroom when he misspelled potato by insisting a student add an extra 'e'.

Mr. Quayle has now declared a truce with Hollywood. He watched the show with his wife Marilyn along with single mothers and fathers in a predominantly minority Washington neighbourhood.

After the broadcast, Mr. Quayle said "the show was certainly critical of me. It was basically another Clinton campaign."

As he left the house, he was largely booed by the crowd outside.

But Mr. Quayle added that "I'm going to continue about traditional values." He said that "Hollywood simply does not reflect our values."

Like Murphy Brown's fictional child, the controversy has taken on a life of its own.

Mr. Quayle told the fictional baby in a real hand-written letter sent to the show's producers that the baby had spurred the debate on family values.

"You may not realise it yet, but you've helped start an important discussion on ways to strengthen our traditional values," Mr. Quayle said in a letter released Monday.